

**MERGING TECHNOLOGY AND CHRISTIAN EDUCATION:
A METHOD FOR REACHING
GENERATION X**

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ABSTRACT

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by

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Saint Paul African Methodist Episcopal Church, a 105-year-old inner city church in Columbus Ohio, has maintained consistent worship service attendance. However, Christian education has declined in Generation X attendance. The researcher hypothesized that by engaging Christian educators in eight modules focusing on merging technology with traditional teaching methods when implemented Christian educators would be equipped to teach Generation X. A qualitative and quantitative research methodology was used to measure the effectiveness of the training. The study yielded positive results with Christian education leaders reporting increased skills and motivation to merge technology and traditional teaching methods for Generation X.

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I would like to thank God for inspiration, vision, and unmerited love. My gratitude extends to the wonderful angels God has placed in my life—my loving husband, Mr. Jimmie Locke, III and my encouraging parents, Presiding Elder Robert Lee McCants, Sr. and Maggie Ruth Heriott McCants. I appreciate the unconditional love I have received and always being challenged to move beyond my comfort zone. Thanks for saying “you can do it, girl.” I say thank you to my sister Sondra McCants Jones and my “little brother” Robert Lee McCants, Jr. for teaching me that it is truly better to give than receive.

My gratitude extends to my awesome mentor, Dr. J. Sherman Pelt, for his guidance on this journey of training me to do the work God has called me to do. I appreciate Dr. Pelt for making our learning a priority and for exposing me to contexts of ministry. To my Phase V peer group members, Kecia, Pat, and Terry, it was an awesome experience to share this journey with you.

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My appreciation also extends to the bishop of the Third Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the Rt. Rev. Robert V. Webster and my pastor, Rev. Dr. Michael Bean, Jr. Thank you for your commitment to excellence in ministry and mentoring young ministers. I appreciate all of the assistance from Team Omega, Inc, Teach Enterprises, and Outcomes Management Group in making this research project a success.

It takes many villages to develop a well-adjusted adult and I am thankful for the villages at South Carolina State University, Payne Theological Seminary, St. Paul AME Church, Shaffer Chapel AME Church (my first charge) and the “metropolitan” city of Sumter, South Carolina for guiding me to be the person I am today. It is my prayer that I will give back to the world all of the love, gifts and teachings that I have been blessed to receive.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this document to those loving spirits that have gone on before me: William McCants, Sr., Isabella McCants, Douglas Herriott, Sr., Maggie Lee Herriott, and Pearl Althea Shaw.

ABBREVIATIONS

AMEC	African Methodist Episcopal Church
NAS	New American Standard

INTRODUCTION

Christian education has potential beyond any other congregational influence to deepen faith and commitment.¹ Christian education programs are the principal means by which members begin to develop spiritually, learn values, and gain the knowledge necessary to become disciples for Christ.² The term “Christian education” is frequently used in the church to encompass various ministries. For the purpose of this research project, this researcher has adopted the definition of Christian education as offered by Lora-Ellen McKinney:

Christian education is, above all else, a process that helps a community of believers understand theology, learn Christian history, reinforce personal decisions to live for Christ, and make commitments to the internal and outreach ministries of the local church.³

McKinney adds that the purpose of Christian education is to equip individuals with the information to:

learn basic Christian beliefs (theology), gain knowledge about the life of Jesus, understand and commit to the study of the Bible, become disciples of Christ, increase awareness of the history of the Christian church, learn God’s plan for life, prepare for change, create a community of Christian believers, incorporate the beliefs and expectations of Christianity into daily life, participate fully in the ritual of worship, identify and appropriately use spiritual gifts,

¹ Israel Galindo, *The Craft of Christian Teaching: Essentials for Becoming a Very Good Teacher* (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1998), 4.

² Michael S. Lawson and Robert J. Choun, Jr., eds., *Directing Christian Education* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1992), 16.

³ Lora-Ellen McKinney, *Christian Education in the African American Church a Guide for Teaching Truth* (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 2003), 2.

discern the commitment of Christianity, become good stewards of the resources that God has given, learn the history and specific beliefs of denominations, grow toward maturity in Christ, remake lives to God's purpose, be prepared for faithful service, and grow in our understanding of God's Word and His will for the world and our individual lives.⁴

Christian education is about more than learning. It is also about living a Godly life.

Consequently, it is a very important element in the church. Robert J. Whittet describes the church as:

The church is people in relationship with Christ, seeking to be the very presence of Christ in the lives of others and within society. It is the coming together of these individuals which forms the church, or as Paul describes it in I Corinthians 12, the body of Christ. . . . The head of the body is Jesus Christ.⁵

The role of Christian educators within the church is to minister to new and seasoned Christians explaining the plan that Christ has for each human being. These teachings should focus on Christ being the foundation of life.⁶ Simply stated, Lora-Ellen McKinney describes Christian education as a "ministry."⁷ The most commonly used teaching method in Christian education programs encompasses the didactic or instructional strategy. This method involves the presentation of information orally to a group of students.⁸ McKinney suggests that the traditional method of teaching may not be the most appropriate especially when engaging younger generations because it fails to take into account the

⁴ McKinney, *Christian Education*, 15-16.

⁵ Michael J. Anthony, *Evangelical Dictionary of Christian Education*, ed. Robert J. Whittet (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), 142.

⁶ McKinney, *Christian Education*, xi.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid., 28.

learning strategies of these generations which consist of: visual, auditory, kinesthetic (touch) and relational (requiring interaction) methods.⁹

A portion of the members engaged in Christian education programming belongs to Generation X. Generation X consists of individuals born between the years of 1964 and 1981 (25 to 42 years of age).¹⁰ This generation comprises about 50 million people in the United States or 17 percent of the population.¹¹ Members of Generation X are growing up in a technological culture with digital media ingrained in every aspect of their lives. This generation finds it common to have multiple types of technology in their home, school, and office.¹² Technology refers to electronic means of transmitting information that utilizes a large range of communication equipment and programs (e.g., radio, film,

⁹ Ibid., 57-58. McKinney provides detailed information for teaching the various learning styles. She indicates that auditory learners will benefit from: “lectures, group discussions, asking them to summarize the major themes addressed in a class, workshop or seminar, using a variety of auditory methods (discussion, lecture, song, and class readings), and varying the tone and pitch of your voice and the emphasis placed on words to maintain learner interest.” Visual learners benefit from: “providing handouts that outline the class contents, illustrating lecture points with visual aids (e.g., PowerPoint, overhead projectors, laser pointers, maps, artwork), art activities, computer-based projects, use of timelines as memory aides for historical events, teaching materials that include photographs, charts, and graphs in addition to written information, and varying types of visual information to maintain interest.” Kinesthetic learners are reported to benefit from: “computer-based projects, dramatic arts, liturgical dance, building projects, breaks, providing feedback made on projects, and allowing adequate time for project completion.” Many individuals embrace more than one learning style at a time (e.g., a person may be both a kinesthetic learning and also a visual learner).

¹⁰ Andrea Lee Schieber and Ann Terman Olson, eds., *What Next Connecting Your Ministry With the Generation formally known as X* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1999), 18. The term Generation X derives from a novel by Douglas Coupland entitled, “*Generation X: Tales for an Accelerated Culture*” that was written in 1991. The X by many interpreters has stood for indifference and lack of motivation. There have been several classifications for generations before Generation X that are currently living today: GI Generation born before 1933, Builder Generation born between 1933 and 1945, and the Boomers born between 1946 and 1964. There is also the Y generation for individuals born between 1981 and 2000.

¹¹ “Generation X Definition,” OnPoint Marketing and Promotions; available from <http://www.onpoint-marketing.com/generation-x.htm>; Internet; accessed October 26, 2006.

¹² Don Tapscott, *Growing up Digital The Rise of the Net Generation* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1998), 1.

television, CD-ROMs, graphics, and the Internet).¹³ Generation X members have become accustomed to having information visually attractive to them containing bright pictures, moving graphics, and items they can manipulate.¹⁴ The literature indicates that Generation X members learn best when information is presented visually. Schieber and Olson suggest that this is based on the visual electronic culture in which they have grown up.¹⁵ Although, some members from this generation are represented in churches today, they have been referred to as the most “unchurched” generation in American history.¹⁶

St. Paul AMEC is an inner-city church located in Columbus, Ohio with about 300 adults and 75 children who consistently attend for church and various ministries. Generation X represents about 90 members of the church’s active membership and 15 Generation X members attend Christian education programming consistently.¹⁷ Church records indicate that there have been no training sessions for Christian education leaders focusing on merging technology with Christian education.¹⁸ Additionally, the typical teaching method is lecture style with hand printed outlines.

The current research project focused on designing eight training modules to train Christian education leaders at St. Paul AMEC to merge technology with traditional teaching techniques as a means of equipping them to meet the needs of Generation X.

¹³ Len Wilson, *The Wired Church: Making Media Ministry* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1999), 16-17. Wilson adds, in his discussion on electronic media that it will continue to change and grow as technology continues to improve.

¹⁴ Anne Hird, *Learning from Cyber-Savvy Students* (Sterling, Virginia: Stylus Publishing, LCC, 2000), 130.

¹⁵ Schieber and Olson, *What Next*, 24-25.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 5.

¹⁷ St. Paul AME Church, “2005 Church Records” located at St. Paul AMEC.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

Background information obtained from the participants was utilized to assist in designing the modules. Pre-test and Post-tests were administered to measure learning. Data was analyzed using quantitative and qualitative measures.

There will be six chapters to follow in this document that provide detailed information about this research study, the results and future recommendations. Chapter One of this research project provides background information about the researcher (spiritual autobiography), informs the reader of the researcher's context of ministry (contextual analysis), and highlights how the researcher's background and current context coincide to provide the current focus for research (synergy). Thus, providing the central problem that the researcher believes they are called to solve. Chapter Two provides an analysis of data from literature regarding current information and research in the area of merging technology in Christian education programs in the church. Chapter Three provides the theological, biblical, and historical foundations for the research study. Chapter Four discusses the methodology and the design of the model to be used in the field experience. Chapter Five provides the reader with detailed information regarding the steps taken to complete this study. Chapter Six provides the reader with a summary of the research project, reflections, and conclusion.

CHAPTER ONE

MINISTRY FOCUS

Life for Ruth M. McCants has been a journey filled with many experiences, relationships, and lessons, which she refers to as souvenirs, that have allowed her to grow spiritually as a child of God. This journey has stretched her beyond imagination, opened her heart, increased her insight, developed her faith, guided her to her life purposes, enhanced her understanding, fostered a spirit of love, and allowed her to develop a strong relationship with God.

Ruth's journey started in the small city of Sumter, South Carolina, in which she was part of the sixth generation of children from both sides of her family born in this area. The quaintness of the city provided opportunities for her immediate and extended family to depend on each other for love, support and fellowship in their daily interactions. All of her paternal and maternal aunts and uncles went to the city's one African-American school together. Both her mom and dad came from humble beginnings, but their families made sure that they were "brought up" in church, educated, and had strong moral values. Ruth believes that it was these beginnings that taught her parents to depend on God, to persevere, and to have compassion for others in need.

Ruth's father held at least two full-time jobs, working as a principal then later as a superintendent of education. Simultaneously, he was serving as pastor of two churches then later presiding over a district of churches within the African Methodist Episcopal

Church. Her mother was a fifth grade teacher and worked diligently in the church district in which her father either pastored or presided. Ruth was the second of three children in her family with one sister, Sondra, who was four years older and one brother, Robert, who was 12 years younger. Her parents made sure that they were all baptized as infants and made a commitment to God that they would teach them about God through bible study, prayer, and regular church attendance. Being the daughter of parents who were both educators and spiritual leaders, Ruth could not recall a time in which she did not study, attend church, pray and worship God.

Ruth's parents took advantage of every possible learning moment to increase their children's knowledge and also to provide them with spiritual truths. Simple trips to the park were learning experiences instead of basic playground fun. They had to talk about the different clouds in the sky, the various species of animals, the plant life and, most importantly, the creator of all these wonderful things. Due to the hectic lives of her parents, it was critical for them to have optimal use of their time. As a result, they provided endless means for their children to learn and grow both formally through homework and informally through family trips.

As a child, God was as real to Ruth as her parents and other family members. Ruth understood God to be a spirit who had super powers allowing God to be everywhere all at the same time and that God would always be with her as her guide through life. Early experiences and teachings from Ruth's parents and Sunday school teachers allowed her to develop the "souvenir" of having a strong foundation in God. She understood very clearly that it was God who allowed the sun to rise and set each day regardless of the theories of evolution that were taught in science class. She understood that it was God who was always making sure that her needs were met.

One Sunday when her father did the call to Christian discipleship, Ruth formally accepted Christ into her life at the age of seventeen. After accepting Christ in a more personal way, she felt compelled to be even more consistent and diligent in her personal worship and attendance in Bible study classes. Christianity for her was a lifestyle and expanded beyond the Sunday morning experience. Teenagers in high school can be very cruel to students who are different in any way from the mainstream population. Living a Christian lifestyle compelled her to intervene on behalf of the children at school who were being teased for their communicative or cognitive difficulties. Ruth viewed these children as being of the same value as all people. Ruth knew that these students could learn, but that traditional ways of teaching probably did not work for them. She believed that everyone was intelligent in his or her own way. Therefore, she decided to attend South Carolina State University and majored in speech-language pathology to help children with communication and cognitive challenges. It was during this time that Ruth realized the importance of teaching using various types of technology. She was able to see children who were labeled as cognitively below average surpass their peers when information was taught to them using visual and tactile means along with the traditional teaching methods. After completing her bachelor's degree, Ruth continued her education at South Carolina State University as a graduate student in speech-language pathology. It was in graduate school that she began to embrace the use of technology and multimedia as a creative way of presenting information. It was apparent that everyone was excited when it was her group's turn to present projects, which were expected to be educational, interesting, and exciting. Even years after graduating from school, classmates would comment on some of the exciting presentations for some of the most difficult to understand topics. Ruth was

compelled to continue her learning process and she accepted a scholarship to enter postgraduate studies at Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio.

Ruth was active at St. Paul AMEC immediately upon arriving in Columbus for post graduate school and was drawn to serving as a vacation bible schoolteacher and working with youth. She maintained these positions throughout her education at Ohio State University and her work as a speech-language pathologist. As a youth leader, Ruth began to realize that it was necessary to use the technology that she used in teaching in academia with the youth of the church in various activities, bible studies, and worship services. She used video clips and games to spark discussions of life issues and biblical stories. The children loved the classes, which allowed them to acquire souvenirs on their journey through life. During, this same time, Ruth was extremely stressed due to the lack of support of her doctoral advisor at Ohio State University. Ruth communicated her concerns with her advisor on several occasions and the advisor had no desire to improve. Ruth was in a tough situation because her advisor was the only person on campus who specialized in her area of study, which was traumatic brain injury. Ruth was in great turmoil because she had moved all the way to the Midwest to study under a specialist in the field and the specialist had no regard for her as a student. Ruth then made the painful decision to discontinue her enrollment at Ohio State University and began to look at other schools that had programs in traumatic brain injury. At the same time, Ruth accepted a clinical internship at a facility in Columbus while she was searching. It was during this time that Ruth felt God was calling her to pastor. She required many confirmations from God to make sure that her perception was not based on her pain from her educational experience. Then, after her final confirmation, she acknowledged God's call formally to her pastor at St. Paul AMEC and her father in South Carolina. She entered Payne

Theological Seminary in order to gain more souvenirs that would equip her with the tools to be an effective pastor while still teaching at St. Paul AME Church. Ruth found herself increasingly in environments in which she saw that only visual stimuli could effectively convey very sensitive messages. She began to use various computer programs and utilize various multimedia technologies to complete presentations. She began to value how much this technology added to lessons while a student at Payne Theological Seminary. Ruth graduated from Payne Theological Seminary and began to use even more of her skills in her teaching of various workshops and classes.

At first glance, Ruth's souvenirs appeared to be small lessons that helped to develop her spiritually and personally. However, these small souvenirs or spiritual lessons when passed on and kept alive have the potential to change the whole world one person at a time. It is her desire to continue on this journey by collecting as many souvenirs that God places before her and by discarding souvenirs that are not consistent with the essence of God. She knows that God will continue to protect, guide and love her throughout the days of her life. Ruth is appreciative to God for all that God has blessed her with. Her process of gaining and discarding souvenirs will continue until the day that her spirit leaves her body. It is her desire to share all that God has blessed her with in order to improve the lives of others.

She is continuing to share these souvenirs with others at her home church St. Paul AMEC. St. Paul African Methodist Episcopal Church (AMEC) has been serving Columbus, Ohio for 181 years. This church is the oldest African-American Church in the city of Columbus. St. Paul AMEC was developed in 1823 by Moses Freeman and 13 members from Town Street Church in Columbus, Ohio. The church was originally called Bethel AMEC and located in the eastern downtown area of Columbus, Ohio. In 1830, a

new church structure was built almost in the center of the downtown area of Columbus, Ohio. In 1905, the pastor of the church purchased lots on the eastern side of the downtown area for 6,000 dollars and a new church structure was built. This is where the current church stands today. In 1956, the church's pastor, Rev. Shaw, purchased land across the street from the church. This building houses the church offices, classrooms, and a multipurpose room.¹ The church is located by two major interstates in Columbus, which are interstate 71 and interstate 70. Many people working in the downtown area pass the church at least once each day.

Columbus, Ohio is a city that is growing very fast. According to the 2000 census report, it is the highest populated city in the state of Ohio. The Census reports that there are about 711,470 people living in Columbus. Forty-nine percent of these people are male and 51 percent are females. Individuals classified as white make up the majority population in Columbus with 483,332 people and African Americans make up the majority minority population with 174,065 people. Additionally, .3 percent of the population is classified as American Indian and Alaska Native, 3.4 percent classified as Asian, 1.2 percent classified as other, 2.6 percent classified as a combination of two or more races, and 2.5 percent classified as Hispanics. Seventy-six percent of the population is over the age of 18 and 9 percent are over the age 65. The median age for individuals in Columbus is 31.²

St. Paul AMEC is located in the area referred to as the inner city. The church is located within walking distance of some lower income housing areas. However, immediately surrounding the church is a car dealership, community college, historical

¹ *St. Paul AMEC 180 Year Anniversary Video*, prod. and dir. Jim Locke, St. Paul AMEC, videocassette.

² *2000 Census Report*, available from www.census.gov; Internet; accessed October 26, 2006.

buildings that serve as office buildings, and Interstate 71. The housing areas within three miles around the church are beginning to change. Caucasian individuals are purchasing homes in the poor African-American community for very low prices and are refurbishing them into homes with values at or above 400,000 dollars. City data indicates that most of the houses surrounding the church range between 124, 999 dollars and 499,999 dollars.³ Overall, the community surrounding the church is African-American. Very few of the individuals in the community surrounding the church are actually members of the church. A majority of the members of St. Paul AMEC commute from the suburbs for all church activities. St. Paul has some ministries and festivals that have actively made efforts to extend themselves to the community and some individuals are starting to come to the church.⁴

St. Paul AMEC is often referred to as a highly educated church. There are professionals from almost every field who are members of this church. Sixty percent of the individuals within the church have a family history within the church. Forty percent of the members have no familial ties with the church and have relocated to Columbus due to job opportunities or attending school. There are about 700 adults and 150 children who are listed on the roll of being members of St. Paul AMEC. However, generally there are about 300 adults and 75 children who are consistently in attendance for church and various ministries. These 700 adults consist of 65% women and 35% men. The church has

³ "43215 Zip Code Detailed Profile," City Data; available from www.city-data.com/zips; Internet; accessed October 26, 2006.

⁴ "Jammin' in Jefferson Park," St. Paul African Methodist Episcopal Church; available from www.stpaulcols.org; Internet; accessed October 26, 2006.

maintained approximately the same number of members over the years with a few members leaving and a few members joining.⁵

The current pastor of St. Paul AMEC was appointed to this church in 1989. The pastor has one local minister assigned to the church, and five retired ministers who are active in the ministerial duties of the church. Additionally, there are three associate ordained itinerate ministers within the church and 7 individuals at various stages in the ordination process.⁶ The church has transitioned from having two very traditional conservative worship services under the leadership of the previous pastor into maintaining the traditional conservative 7:45AM service and a more contemporary worship service for the 11AM service. Most of the young adults at St. Paul AMEC attend the 11AM service.

The current Pastor of St. Paul has readily embraced the idea of allowing individuals with specific gifts to lead various ministries within church that will address the needs of the members of the church and the community. The church theme under this pastor is, "A People Ready for Ministry." There are over twenty active ministries within the church. Most of the ministries focus on activities for children like dance ministry, various church school classes, youth development classes, a rites of passage program for high school seniors, two youth choirs, vacation bible school and the upcoming children's church.⁷ These activities are usually well attended by the children. There are several young and growing families within the church. However, there is also a large number of elderly. There are several programs in place to ensure that the elderly individuals have consistent

⁵ St. Paul AME Church. 2005 Church Records located at St. Paul AMEC.

⁶ Annual Conference Report, African Methodist Episcopal Church. Bishop Robert V. Webster Oct 2005.

⁷ Becky Holliman, "At the Corner," St. Paul AMEC church magazine, 15 June 2006.

visitation, regularly scheduled outings, and bus transportation. The average age of individuals within the church over 18 is 50 years old. There is one bible study that is geared for young adults in college or graduate school; however, it does not have great attendance by the young adults of the church. The church has a two primary Christian education programs available for adults between the ages of 25 and above. However, they are not greatly attended by members in this age range. There is the church school on Sunday morning that is available for every age group and has been in place for many years and about 50 adults consistently attend these programs.⁸ There are three weekly Bible Study classes. One class is held at lunchtime on Tuesday and the other classes are in the evenings on Wednesday and Thursday night. These classes' usually average about 10 adults per class and are usually taught by the retired ministers in the church or retired educators. These individuals have had a long history of teaching in the church and the techniques used in teaching and developing various programs are the same methodologies that have been used for many years.

The pastor of St. Paul has recently appointed a young adult to be the co-chair of the Christian education department. She is very interested in revitalizing many of the classes and programs in order to get more people actively attending classes and realizing that just going to church on Sunday is not enough. She has noted that there has been no attempt to incorporate technology or make modifications based on the current time within the Christian education program. She has been given the responsibility of recruiting a few new leaders for the Christian education program.

⁸ Patricia L. Hicks, *Outcomes management group church survey* (Columbus: 2002)

The pastor of St. Paul realizes that more people need to be studying God's word and learning beyond what is given on Sunday. Additionally, a church survey was taken one year ago and the members of the church expressed a desire for more Christian education classes and for the associate ministers to take a more active role within the worship service and teaching of Christian education classes.⁹

The new co-chair of the Christian education ministry asked Rev. Ruth McCants, one of the associate ministers, to organize and develop this new program for Christian education. The church is in the process of building a new wellness center and a portion of this new wellness center will have a multipurpose room that will have the latest technology in multimedia programs and will be available to the Christian education department. Ruth has long had a passion for serving others and finding new ways to teach individuals. She has been well trained in the academic arena and the effectiveness of her training was demonstrated while she was working with the youth groups. She has excellent resources available to her from relationships that she developed in seminary that will allow her to create a meaningful program. She is excited about the opportunity to bring change by creating a new model for Christian education that incorporates various types of technology that will improve the Christian educational experience of the young adult members of St. Paul AMEC. Ruth believes that the best way to incorporate change for the Christian education department will be to develop a series of training models that will equip, empower, and inspire Christian educators within St. Paul to merge the use of technology with traditional teaching methods as a means of reaching young adults within the church. Therefore, representatives from every aspect of Christian education at St. Paul

⁹ Hicks. *Church Survey*.

AMEC will be taught in eight training modules to incorporate technology into their current teaching styles as a means of enhancing the Christian education experience and meeting the needs of young adult members of the church.

CHAPTER TWO

THE STATE OF THE ART IN THIS MINISTRY PROJECT

Generation X

Recent literature provides pertinent information regarding the Generation X culture, the church embracing technology and the importance of training educators. Generation X is a diverse group of young adults that ranges between the ages of 25 and 42.¹ These cohorts have been referred to as the generation that had the most toys, televisions, video games, movies, and gadgets. Generation X members have luxury items easily accessible to them and were often latch key children left to explore these items on their own.² These young adults are living in what has been called an electronic age in which most individuals employ some type of technology in every aspect of their life, from paying bills on the Internet to using navigation systems in their cars. Generation X utilizes the Internet daily both professionally and personally for shopping, banking, researching, stock trading, developing relationships, and online instruction.³

¹ Janet M. Corpus, Christine L. Reifschneider, Michael Housholder, Pam Fickenscher, Richard Webb, and Mark A. Peterson, "A New Generation" in *What Next? Connecting Your Ministry With The Generation Formerly Known as X*. eds. Andrea Lee Schieber and Ann Terman Olson (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1999), 18.

² Schieber and Olson, *What Next*, 24-25.

³ Manuel Castells, *The Internet Galaxy: Reflections on the Internet Business, and Society* (New York: Oxford, 2001), 60-70.

This use of technology contrasts greatly to their parents and grandparents. Many years ago, the phone book and the library were considered to be information super highways. Today, however, our world can be considered a vast information oasis joined together by a simple click of a mouse.⁴ Mahedy and Bernardi state, "Generation X is the first wave of humanity to reach adulthood on the postindustrial side of the new historical divide."⁵

Unfortunately, Generation X has been referred to as the most unchurched generation in American history.⁶ Other authors have referred to them as the first generation brought up without religion.⁷ Mahedy and Bernardi suggest that the time is now for older Christians and members of Generation X to participate actively, intelligently, and with great excitement in refashioning the Church in ways that have not been possible for more than sixteen centuries."⁸

Technology

Organizations targeting or striving to influence Generation X will need the presence of the Internet and be technologically savvy.⁹ The Internet has been referred to the world's fastest growing means of technology. Careaga indicates that, like the printing

⁴ John P. Jewell. *Wired for Ministry: How the Internet, Visual Media, and Other New Technologies Can Serve Your Church* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2004), 18.

⁵ William Mahedy and Janet Bernardi, *A Generation Alone* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1994), 37. Generation X refers to the 13th American generation since the United States began in 1776. X is an algebraic equation and has limitless possibilities like the members of this generation.

⁶ Schieber and Olson, *What Next*, 5.

⁷ Douglas Coupland, *Generation X: Tales for an Accelerated Culture* (New York: St. Martin's Press), 126.

⁸ Mahedy and Bernardi, *Generation Alone*, 1994.

⁹ Schieber and Olson, *What Next*, 33-34.

press, the Internet is forcing us to rewrite how we do things even in the church.¹⁰ Religious leaders are exploring cyber churches and video ministries providing opportunities for groups to dialog and study scriptures together on the Internet, thus, expanding the perception of the traditional church and traditional teaching methods of the church.¹¹ New options for ministry are available for those in the local church and people located across the world. Video ministry is an added form of communication developed to meet the spiritual needs and interests of young adults and youth.¹² Delp and Lusz support young adults in producing Christian messages from personal perspectives using multimedia. These authors reveal that the young adults were able to share their personal stories as they related to the gospel based on their specific environments,¹³ thus, providing the opportunity for a more meaningful and effective message. Young adults are trained to pay attention to information that enters their world through visual images instead of printed text.¹⁴ This researcher believes that this is a venue of learning that Christian education should embrace.

Raja completed a study in which he found that individuals within India were having difficulty interpreting and accepting information from missionaries that was based on written material and verbal teachings. He developed two video programs that incorporated communication through dance and humor in which the culture was accustomed as a means

¹⁰ Andrew Careaga, *Connecting with the Net Generation eMinistry* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2001), 7.

¹¹ Careaga, *Connecting*, 18.

¹² Jewell, *Wired*, 15-25.

¹³ Jay Delp and Joel Lusz, *Just Shoot Me! A Practical Guide for Using Your Video Camera in Youth Ministry* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 19-24.

¹⁴ Ibid.

of conveying Christian messages. It was found that using this “alternative” means of conveying information through media allowed individuals to be more attentive and accepting of the Christian word. Raja suggests that it is important that the worldview of the audience be taken into account when attempting to present information. He found that video is often used simply as a tool and often erroneously is perceived simply as entertainment. Raja found that with thoughtful planning entertainment can be an effective means of both engaging the audience and presenting a message.¹⁵

Overall, the church is moving at a snail’s pace toward using technology.¹⁶ The church is often the only place in which technology is either not used at all or not used to its optimal potential. John P. Jewell makes this statement regarding technology and the church,

The church, especially the mainline, has lagged behind in getting on board with opportunities that are available for mission and ministry through the use of new technologies. But this is changing. A growing number of voices call for reaching the world for Christ, engaging the younger generation, and bringing new life to worship, all through the power of new technologies.¹⁷

Applying technology in the church assists in fulfilling the charge of the church.¹⁸ Carega adds, “In scores of Internet chat rooms, people and computers go to church together.” People are learning and experiencing worship within these Internet churches.¹⁹ A number of writers see the use of technology in the church as a reclaiming of the arts for

¹⁵ John Joshva Raja, *Facing The Reality Of Culture, Church and Communication* (Delhi: Kashmere Gate, 2001), 13.

¹⁶ Jewell, *Wired*, 16.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Carega, *Connecting*, 8.

the kingdom of God. This perspective perceives technology as having the same significant meanings as the beautiful portraits telling Biblical stories found on the walls and ceilings of churches around the world.²⁰ On the contrary, others see technology in Christianity as being inventive and creative in meeting the needs of many individuals globally with a good measure of success. As reported by Hahn and Verrhaagen:

In domestic mission we face the same challenge as global missionaries. How do we translate the gospel into local language for people who know little or nothing of Jesus Christ? How do we communicate the message of God's saving love? How do we do that in ways that embody love? Domestic mission is a challenge because it means change. When we talk about "church" we are generally referring to what we are comfortable with—what makes sense to us and what we know. We are insiders. The church's mission is directed toward people who have not heard and for about Christ them the church is not familiar because they are outside of it. Inviting them into community will change the community. We can anticipate that such change will enliven the church as new believers share new gifts in the body of Christ. Scripture and history teach and encourage us to meet the challenge of proclaiming the gospel to people different from ourselves. We are also given examples of communicating to people in a manner that would be most meaningful to them. In the bible we find that God communicates in diverse ways: God came to Jacob in a dream (Genesis 28:12-15), to Moses in a burning bush (Exodus 3-4), spoke to Jesus from a cloud (Matthew 17:1-8), An angel messenger told Mary that she would bear a child (Luke 1:26-38), and Saul heard Jesus' voice on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:1-19).²¹

God's example should be our model for reaching out to others.

Susannah Schmidt is among a group of Christian educators who oppose the church making changes from the traditional model. She believes that Generation X should be encouraged to embrace tradition instead of transforming aspects of the traditional church to meet the Generational X style and learning. She states that,

²⁰ Wilson, *Wired Church*, 19.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 9.

Taking up the Generation X challenge does not mean tailoring or fashioning the demands of faith to X situation, or that Generation X should simply surrender faith to culture. Schmidt's perspective indicates that Generation X relates with churches, part of Generation X's experiential quest can involve inviting and challenging each other to engage with tradition, taking seriously the fact that the church does carry and mediate Jesus' teachings and spirit through the ages. Engaging both with popular culture and the church, Generation X might discover that self-conscious reinvention can be eclipsed by broader visions and needs.²²

Schmidt is purporting that the needs and realities of Generation X should almost be ignored, which would allow the church to hold onto traditional ways of thinking and teaching. This researcher believes that this perspective has resulted in the church having a culture in which young adults cannot relate. As a result, they choose not to attend. Schmidt's views are contrary to effective communication in Christian education.

Jewell makes a realistic statement about technology and the church. He indicates that technology can add to the life and community of the church or it can cause division. He reports that many types and aspects of technology can be intrusive, such as, cell phones, the increased amount of time it takes to prepare a message using technology, and the cost/availability of equipment.²³ However, even with these stresses, Jewell believes that the most important factor when incorporating technology or presenting information orally should always be the intention and the spirit behind the message. He sites I Corinthians 12:31-12:1 emphasizing love as a model of what should be the basis of using technology in the church.²⁴ Jewell cautions that the use of technology alone does not

²² Susannah Schmidt, "Virtually abandoned: reflections on 'Gen X' faith and the church," Catholic New Times, February 29, 2004; [article online] Available from <http://www.highbeam.com/library/docfree.asp?DOCID=1G1:130216524&ctrlInfo=Round20%3AMode20e%3ADocG%3AResult&ao=>; Internet; Accessed October 26, 2006.

²³ Jewell, *Wired*, 33.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

create a sense of community in the church.²⁵ This can only be done by interaction.

Interactions, even in the world of technology, should be honest in the message they are conveying. It is tempting to use media in a misleading way to draw people into what they think is a secular event and then, when they show up, it is a Christian function. Wilson states that it is imperative that the church maintains its integrity and honesty in its use of technology.²⁶

Cost can be a major limitation for many churches that are struggling to survive. The equipment necessary to have a well-developed media ministry can be quite costly.²⁷ Using multi-media technology within the church can involve having a significant financial cost if every item has to be purchased.²⁸ Using multi-media often requires at least the use of a computer, screen, projector, and a sound system. This obviously can be a challenge for churches that are on limited budgets.

Jewell's book entitled *Wired for Ministry* provides practical steps for ministries, such as Internet-based learning classes, that are estimated to cost under \$1,000.00 dollars. This set-up would include the website, online magazine, and a discussion board for online groups. This would be appropriate for churches with limited resources. Churches with more funding can delve deeper into more expensive items like the basic projection systems that costs at least \$4,000 and extend to \$10,000. These systems allow visual information to be projected clearly in large spaces. Additionally, Jewell reports an appropriate computer system costs at least \$3,000 and digital cameras range from \$100 to \$1,000

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Wilson, *Wired Church*, 22

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Richard Webb, 129.

dollars. He adds that a good basic software budget is about \$1,600 and studio cameras cost at least \$7,000 each.²⁹ Technological equipment can be extremely expensive and more than many churches can afford.

Jewell notes that the challenging part is not always developing web-based classes or balancing the budget to pay for classes. The major issue resides in attaining commitment from those who are enrolling. Jewell suggests having a program that entails both the traditional method of physically meeting together combined with the web-based learning class. It is important to get a strong commitment from participants at the onset of the class. He suggests each member make a covenant commitment to engage in each class. Jewell indicates that this tends to yield the best results for participation and commitment on the part of the learners. Additionally, he suggests that the organizer of online Christian education be proactive in making provisions for individuals who do not have access to the Internet (e.g., help them get access at home, have a station available at church, or provide them with a list of locations that have free access near their homes like the library).³⁰

Training

Tapscott suggests that just unloading millions of computers is not the solution to the problem. He believes that well-developed programs and training are critical to the facilitation of learning and equipping of teachers. Tapscott made the analogy that giving everyone a computer is like giving all sick people one type of medication regardless of their ailment.³¹ Technology use should be customized for specific environments and

²⁹ Wilson, *Wired Church*, 115-153.

³⁰ Jewell, *Wired*, 105.

³¹ Tapscott, *Growing*, 135.

audiences of people. There is a need for a strong, clear and well-thought understanding of the interactions between ministry and technology, along with digital capabilities and discipleship. Consequently, training is imperative for incorporating technology into Christian education to meet the needs of Generation X. Training will allow for integration as opposed to disconnection with ministry goals.³²

In today's educational arenas, the greatest success is found when educators use strategies that are designed for multiple learning styles.³³ Reading for Generation X is often linked to Internet searches.³⁴ A narrative discipleship has been suggested as a means of ministering to Generation X, which involves presenting the gospel in a manner that relates directly to their lives.³⁵ In order for this information to be conveyed and received by young adults, it must be entertaining, dramatic material, and informative with minimal lecturing.³⁶

The time period in which Generation X is living demands that we utilize what the church often deems as an unusual or different means of communicating the gospel. Our challenge as a church is to communicate the love of Jesus to these young adults in a way that is meaningful, engaging, interesting, and relevant to their everyday lives using tools with which they are familiar. Why are these young adults in Generation X so important? Generation X represents what should be a large part of our present church and will one

³² Jewell, *Wired*, 18.

³³ Terry O'Connor, "Using Learning Styles to Adapt Technology for Higher Education," Indiana State University; available from <http://web.indstate.edu/ctl/styles/learning.html> ; Internet; accessed October 26, 2006.

³⁴ Schieber and Olson, *What Next* 129.

³⁵ Todd Hahn and David Verhaagen, *Genxers After God Helping a Generation Pursue Jesus* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1998), 26.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 31.

day be part of the group leading the generation after them to Christ. Training Christian educators to merge technology with Christian education in an attempt to relevantly minister to members of Generation X and beyond will entail many components. There needs to be consistent training, specialized equipment, teamwork, planning, flexibility and consistent evaluation.³⁷ The Canadian Christianity Journal details the need for Christian educators in the United States to engage in a constant retooling. Short training modules are one method of retooling that they strongly support.³⁸

Traditional Christian education teaching generally begins with a scriptural foundation, specific learning objectives, outlines for the information to be presented and questions to get the class engaged. Traditional Christian education can be considered to have a cookie cutter model for presenting information.³⁹ McKinney supports the perspective that Christian educators have not traditionally been effective in ministering taking into account various learning styles.⁴⁰

Data from scientists and psychologists have given us insight into the process of learning: auditory learners retain information best from a lecture format, visual learners retain information best from visual presentations, kinesthetic learners retain information best when learning engages touch and experience, and relational learners learn best when

³⁷ Wilson, *Wired Church*, 13.

³⁸ "Trends Affecting Christian Education," Available from www.Canadianchristianity.com ; Internet; Accessed October 26, 2006.

³⁹ McKinney, *Christian Education*, 56.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

they have developed long trusting relationships.⁴¹ Generation X members have overall been classified as visual learners.⁴²

A study by Raja indicated that Christian communication should always begin at the place in which people are.⁴³ Raja emphasized that training should start with an understating of the learners' current level of functioning. Additionally, when using technology, the focus has to be placed on using the best type of medium (e.g., Internet, multimedia production, or use of ipods) to be used to convey information.

Jewell strongly cautions the church not to allow technology to overtake the primary purpose of the church, which is ministry.⁴⁴ Biblical stories must maintain their integrity. Sample states, "it is especially important to be on guard against the temptation to find out what is persuasive and then bend or "translate" God's story to fit it. The notion of translation is a dangerous one."⁴⁵ Technology should not be used as a money making tool for the church. Its purpose should focus on teaching others about Christ.⁴⁶

Some churches have developed the position of "Minister of Technology." This is a person who has been trained in both theology and technology, resulting in an empowered ministry utilizing technology.⁴⁷ The heart of Christian education lies in communication.

⁴¹ Ibid., 58-62.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ John Joshva Raja, *Facing the Reality of Communication. Culture, Church, and Communication*. (Delhi : Kashmere Gate, 2001), 6.

⁴⁴ Jewell, *Wired*, 124.

⁴⁵ Tex Sample, *The Spectacle of Worship in a Wired World* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1998), 10.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 2.

⁴⁷ Jewell, *Wired*, 124.

Our current society has the opportunity to embrace what Tex Sample refers to as a “multisensory and multimedia” methodology in conveying the Christian message. It is his belief that these are the most persuasive tools that can be used in our culture today.⁴⁸ The teachings in Christian education should be geared toward equipping individuals with the tools necessary to lead a Christ-centered life and giving them the skills necessary to spread information about the love of Christ to others.

Ultimately, each community will decide if the use of technology in their church would be an effective means for spreading the gospel. But, for most congregations, the time is now. Most congregations are more adaptable than many church leaders realize.⁴⁹ Christine L. Reifschneider indicates that Christian education programs that would like to start utilizing various means of technology in their programming should not wait for the masses to be in attendance. The process should begin by ministering to young adults who are currently in the congregation.⁵⁰ Additionally, data from research studies, current educational teaching practices, marketing, and mass media would suggest that using technology within the Christian education programs would be the most effective means of reaching out to Generation X.

Technology, when used effectively, provides the opportunity to tap into various learning styles, communicate with others in distant locations, access information quickly, and allow flexibility for the learner to access information at a time that is convenient for them. Young adults have become accustomed to having information visually attractive to

⁴⁸ Sample, *Spectacle*, 1.

⁴⁹ Jackson W. Carrol and Wade Clark Roof, *Bridging Divided Worlds Generational Cultures in Congregations* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002), 33.

⁵⁰ Schieber and Olson, *What Next*, 36.

them as well as having good information. They have bright pictures, moving graphics, items they can manipulate, and so on.⁵¹ This researcher feels that training is needed to prepare Christian education to meet the needs of Generation X.

⁵¹ Hird, *Cyber-Savvy Students*, 130.

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL FOUNDATION AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Historical Foundations in Communication

From a historical perspective, the manner in which information has been communicated has been in a constant state of evolution. Historians like Crowley and Heyer have traced the evolution of communication from the time in which information was written on cave walls until our current society in which information undergoes electronic transmission. They suggest that this evolution is a natural process that will continue as long as humans are living.¹ Evidence of individuals attempting to find the most efficient manner of communicating and recording data can be traced back to 3500 BC when the Sumerians etched information into rocks called cuneiforms. However, the most radical change in the manner in which information has been transmitted occurred with the development of the printing press by the German inventor Johannes Gutenberg in 1440. He adapted methods used in China for reproducing print into a device that could reproduce data one entire page at a time instead of being hand copied.² The printing press allowed for books to be reproduced at a much faster rate. Typically, it would have taken

¹ David Crowley and Paul Heyer, *Communication in History Technology, Culture, Society* (New York: Longman, 1991), 2-5.

² "History of the printing press," available from <http://www.ideafinder.com/history/inventions/story039.htm>; Internet; accessed October 26, 2006.

years for a book to be reproduced using hand-written methods. The invention of the printing press made a huge impact on the church as a whole by allowing the scriptures to be mass-produced, making the bible more accessible.

The next remarkable move in the world of communication occurred on May 24, 1844 when Samuel Morse established the world's first means of electric communication. The telegraph increased the speed of information from thirty-five miles per hour on a train to the speed of light.³ This allowed even religious information to be transmitted at a much faster rate. The telegraph led to the development of the radio, cameras, and the telephone. These inventions changed the way individuals communicated with each other. It also changed how individuals in the church were able to share information.

In 1926, Father Coughlin propelled Christianity by broadcasting a live radio show to spread the gospel using the new technology of the radio. And in 1952, Bishop Sheen broadcast the Gospel on the show, "Life is Worth Living," on television.⁴ The church as a whole has benefited greatly by advances in technology.

In times past, only movie theaters were able to project data and films. Now, any individual can purchase a projector on the Internet if they have the money to pay for it. Previously, all films had to be purchased and now individuals have all the equipment readily available to them to produce movies themselves. Computers once took up entire rooms and now they can be so small that they can fit into a person's hand. The most recent wave in the world of communication came with the development of the Internet. Today, information can be sent or received by the click of the button. This is the world in

³ Brian McLaren, *The Hidden Power of the Electronic Culture How Media Shapes Faith, The Gospel, and Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 63.

⁴ *The Granger Collection*, available from <http://www.time.com/time/godcom/milestone.html> ; Internet; accessed October 26, 2006.

which young adults of today are living. It is necessary that this evolutionary process continue allowing information to be presented in the most effective way to be more quickly accessible to groups of people in more appealing ways.

Marshall McLuhan made many of these predictions regarding the Internet and the use of technology in the 1960's. McLuhan wrote extensively about what the future would hold for the world based on the dramatic changes that had already occurred. Many people thought his thinking was totally off target. However, most of his predictions came into fruition.⁵ McLuhan believed strongly in the power of technology and how technology would have the potential to change society. We have the seen evidence of how the media and technology has changed and is shaping this world. Information is often presented visually, which allows quick receiving and understanding of material. McLaren demonstrates this by showing the print words "the boy is sad" and then he shows a picture of a little boy who is sad. His example demonstrates the strength of pictorial messages.⁶ McLaren is careful to note that the church should embrace the use of written or spoken material along with pictorial images to enhance comprehension. He also warns that the church should be careful not to allow technology to take over the church so that there is no place for face-to-face interactions. Specifically he states, "Churches have begun to use blogs, chat areas, and electronic bulletin boards in their efforts to build community."⁷

⁵ Brian McLaren, *Hidden Power*, 30.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 73-75.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 80.

Unfortunately, the church is often resistant to change, even if it appears for the good of the whole.⁸ Martin Luther was initially criticized for making religious material accessible by utilizing the printing press.⁹ Some feel that young adults are seeking personal intimate relationships and that these cannot be established by using the Internet. Basing their relationship on Internet connections can cause them to miss out on authentic community with the people they worship with each week, according to Brian McLaren.¹⁰ There are many healthy ways in which technology can creatively and effectively be used in the church if activities are thought through and planned well. Michael Slaughter indicates that, “the effective congregation of the twenty-first century will be part of the Church that makes use of multimedia. The New Reformation will speak the language of the culture and employ the communication technology that shapes the culture.” Slaughter goes as far as saying that the Media Reformation is a life or death issue for the church.¹¹ He suggests that media and technology control the values and the direction of the postmodern culture. And, if the church will have any effect on this generation, they have to utilize the tools with which they are most familiar.¹²

Historical Foundations in Christian Education

The process of Christian education can be traced historically back to the early church with the Hebrews, Greeks, and Romans. The Hebrews allowed Christian educators

⁸ Michael Slaughter, *Out On the Edge Wake-up Call For Church Leaders On The Edge of The Media Reformation* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998), 55.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 25.

¹⁰ Brian McLaren. *Hidden Power*, 112.

¹¹ Slaughter, *Out On The Edge*, 25.

¹² *Ibid.*, 63.

to glean respect for studying scriptures as a “way of life and pleasing God.” The Greeks and Romans taught Christian educators the importance and the process of using philosophical thought and literature as a means of gaining understanding of religious truths. The early years of Christian education consisted primarily of teaching adults who had never heard of God and about God’s wondrous nature. Many of these adults had already been educated with regard to the classical philosophers of Greece and Rome. One of the Major philosophers that individuals studied was Plato, who lived from 427 BCE to 346 BCE. Plato has been referred to as the philosopher who has had the greatest influence on Christian Education. Elias states,

Plato’s Republic, which details his educational ideals, is one of the most influential books in Western culture. Plato argued in this work that the ultimate aim of education is to help individuals go beyond opinions and beliefs in order to arrive at knowledge that is certain and true. For him, besides the ordinary realities of life there exists a realm where pure forms of goodness, justice and love dwell. Through education learners arrive at knowledge of eternal truths, which gives perfection, permanence, security, and certainty to human life. What gives greatest value to human life for Plato is the ascent of the soul from attachment to earthly things to the eternal contemplation of and union with the Good.¹³

Plato’s framework for teaching became a model for Augustine, monastic education and Renaissance education. Aristotle influenced Christian education through his emphasis on finding the deeper meaning of information by gathering and analyzing data. He believed that education should prepare individuals for logical thinking and help them to develop good habits. Cicero and Quintilian, both Roman writers who wrote primarily about education, had a great influence on Christian education. Cicero was the first writer to

¹³ John Elias, *A History of Christian Education Protestant, Catholic, and Orthodox Perspectives* (Malabar, Florida: Krieger Publishing Company, 2002), 1-3. This author notes that some educators contest Plato’s influence on Christian education because he advocated censorship of ancient writings and his belief in dualism of the body and soul. Even with these seemingly negative attributes, Elias believes that Plato’s influences on Christian education have been positive.

write primarily about education and the educational process in *De Oratore*. Cicero believed that the goal of education was to read and discuss various aspects of history and literature, which included written speeches. His process of education involved writing of speeches and participating in mock trials. Quintilian expounded on the beliefs of Cicero by teaching individuals that education was the process by which individuals could acquire intelligence that allowed individuals to make good ethical choices. Once the individual had acquired these two attributes it was their responsibility as orators to teach others.¹⁴

The teachings of Jesus, as found in the Gospels, have been considered to be a biblical foundation of Christian Education.¹⁵ Jesus was often referred to in the Gospels as the master teacher. One of His greatest teaching moments is referred to as the Sermon on the Mount, found in Matthew 5:1-7:29. Jesus used the oral method of teaching, which was popular for that time. Scholars have noted that Jesus was referred to as a teacher or rabbi over fifty times in the Gospel of John.¹⁶ Jesus incorporated teaching into almost every aspect of his ministry. In Luke 22 Jesus, who is not recognized by the disciples, is found teaching them on the road to Emmaus. This apparent stranger teaches the disciples by gleaning from the disciples' personal experiences. Jesus' teaching style in this text is found to be filled with the dialectic of questioning initially and then filled with instruction. Jesus was a model teacher because He deeply cared for all of His students and lived what He taught throughout the land. Jesus empowered His students to follow his model and travel

¹⁴ Elias, *History*, 5.

¹⁵ Kenneth O. Gangel, and Warren S. Benson, *Christian Education: Its History and Philosophy* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1983), 66.

¹⁶ "Rabbi," available from www.crosswalk.com; Internet; accessed October 26, 2006. The word rabbi is defined. "as my master, a title of dignity given by the Jews to their doctors of the law and their distinguished teachers. It is sometimes applied to Christ"

the land teaching others about God. Paul followed the example of Jesus for the Ephesians.¹⁷

Hebrew writings had the greatest influence in Christian Education. Some writers have considered the writings and the teachings of these times (e.g., Jewish Bible and Christian Bible) to be the true beginning of Christian Education. These communities focused on the reading, analysis, interpretation, and application of Biblical text. Christians wanted to influence others to adopt their belief system and to ensure that these beliefs were passed down through the generations. Teaching was the method of spreading this information among the generations. Judaism embraced a three-dimensional educational framework that consisted of priest's teaching the Torah, prophets teaching the Word, and wise individuals giving counsel. The teaching of the Torah occurred primarily in the homes of individuals and during formal rituals. Adults were responsible for answering the questions of the children. They modeled their teachings after Jesus as found in Matthew the fifth chapter. Teachings occurred during weekly gatherings and in the homes of individuals. The type of teaching that was perpetuated was authoritative and led by religious leaders. This is the type of teaching style modeled after Jesus that has been passed on in Christian education.

Clement of Rome's letter to the Corinthians, written toward the end of the first century, provides the first record of the words "Christian Education." He stated, "Let our children share in the education which is in Christ, let them learn the strength of humility before God, the power of pure love before God, how beautiful and great is his fear and

¹⁷ Elias, *History*, 12-21.

how it gives salvation to all who live holy in it with a pure mind.”¹⁸ In his letter, Clement of Rome is noted to use the language of the philosophers to urge the Christians in Corinth to have a unified body. The communities that had embraced Christianity during this time had to strategically develop ways of spreading Christianity to potential converts who had been formally trained within the classical schools of the time. At the beginning of the second century, there was a catechumenate that focused on teaching groups of new Christian students.¹⁹ These instructors used the methods of the Jewish tradition, which involved instructing and testing. The instructions consisted of: reading of scriptures, application of Scriptures, communal reading and interpretation of scriptures, and preaching to apply the teachings to daily life. These groups were typically taught by religious leaders within the community. The classes were effective in addressing the conflict between Christian teachings and the classical formal education of the time.²⁰

During the period known as the Medieval Period between the years of 300 to 1500 CE, there were some small gains for Christian Education. Monastic communities in the West started developing educational programs during the fifth century. Many children and adolescents were accepted into these monasteries that were schools. The Christian education process involved learning to read, memorizing the 150 psalms, listening to readings, and engaging in personal spiritual reading.²¹ The students within Christian Education spent a majority of their time listening and memorizing information.

¹⁸ Kirsopp Lake, trans., *Apostolic Fathers, Volume I* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1952), 47-49.

¹⁹ Gangel and Benson, *Christian Education*, 88.

²⁰ Elias, *History*, 22.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 45.

Additionally, theologians during this time like Augustine wrote many documents focusing on teacher education training. During the ninth and tenth centuries, the church focused primarily on educating their clergy. However, in the 1500's, Luther contrasted these views with his thoughts on the priesthood of all believers or, as one author referred to it, the priesthood of all readers.²² He focused on the education of youth and adolescents, thinking they would be the catalyst for maintaining the beliefs of the Reformation Movement. Luther wrote three articles on education and the church: "To the Councilmen of All Cities in Germany that They Establish and Maintain Christian Schools," "On Keeping Children in School," and "On Christian Freedom." Unfortunately, Christian Education was only accessible to middle and upper class individuals. Luther suggested that, instead of children going to the priest to learn, they could receive their religious education within the school. Luther believed that, in addition to stimulating the thinking of individuals, the schools could also assist in preparing individuals to be of service to God.²³ Luther believed that having access to writings was an imperative part of this process, which made use of the latest technology of the printing press.

Later in history, during the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries, Christian education was increasingly embraced by various denominations. These denominations used their Christian education programs to teach about their denomination's beliefs and belief in God.²⁴ This was particularly evident in the new colonies that were established in America during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in the areas of New York, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. The Quakers and German Lutherans set up schools in these

²² Carrol and Roof, *Bridging Divided Worlds*, 33.

²³ Elias, *History*, 89.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 114.

new colonies. Puritans believed that salvation could not come without some education in the scriptures. So, they incorporated their perspective of Christianity to the educational curriculum for white students in America. The Puritans established Harvard College in 1636 as a training institution for Puritan or Congregational ministry. During the period referred to as the Enlightenment, between 1680 to 1790, religious education in America was challenged greatly by politics. Politicians examined the various aspects of the religious information that was being taught to students. The political leaders were able to see the great degrees in which various philosophies, biblical truths, and science were accepted in varying denomination's schools. Therefore, they attempted to move toward educational programs in which religion did not play that great a role,²⁵ thus forcing the churches to have a greater role in the Christian Education of their members.

The nineteenth and twentieth centuries in the United States were filled with great changes in Christian Education within the churches and an increasing number of denominational belief systems.²⁶ This made it difficult for community school systems to teach religious doctrine and principles as a homogeneous subject. Few churches during this time had all-day educational programs and the responsibility of religious education had to been in the church.²⁷ This remains true even today for churches all over the United States. The challenge is that many churches have not embraced their new responsibility in a dynamic life-changing manner that will affect the lives of individuals. It is evident that most churches have not fully embraced the centrality and importance of Christian education in the lives of its members, especially young adult members. If the churches

²⁵ Ibid., 157.

²⁶ Gangel and Benson, *Christian Education*, 241.

²⁷ Elias, *History*, 159.

really understood this importance, more focus would be made on creating relevant programs that incorporate components of the lifestyles of the people they are serving.

Most churches have passed on the same educational style that was seen as far back as the time of the Plato, in which individuals were lectured to and required to memorize bits of information and biblical text. This style of teaching in isolation fails to take into account that memorization does not always lead to understanding and application. The Episcopal Church realized that something had to be done to minister to youth and young adults in a focused manner. Thus, the Episcopal Church established the first Sunday School in the United States as a means of ministering to children from impoverished backgrounds. The Sunday School Movement in the United States started in 1824 and was led by the American Sunday School Union. At the time of the Civil War, many of the Sunday school classes were led by Protestant churches. Over time, educational opportunities that the church extended to the community and members of their church went well beyond the Sunday experience. Therefore, the term Christian education became a more fitting term that would encompass all of the educational programming within the church. This need to grow and expand has been extremely important for meeting the needs of members of the current generation. Many examples are found in the bible in which transformation and change occurred based on the current societies' needs.

Biblical Foundations

Old Testament scriptural foundations for the importance of using the best and most relevant means of teaching in Christian education programs can be found in Deuteronomy 6:6-9 which states,

And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart. And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house and on thy gates.²⁸

This text is suggested to have been written by Moses in 1407 BCE in the land of Moab located east of the Jordan River.²⁹ The name, “Deuteronomy,” finds its basis in the Latin Vulgate’s *Deuteronomium*, which means second law.³⁰ However, some theologians suggest that the translation of the name is misleading. They believe that the book is simply a reinforcement of the law given at Mt. Sinai found in the book of Exodus.³¹ The book of Deuteronomy is divided into four parts: introduction (1:6-4:40), explanation of the law (5:1-26:19, 27; 28), supplemental discussion (29:1 – 30:20), and closure (31:1-8; 32:4-34:12).³² Moses’ focus in this book of the Bible is to teach the Israelites the manner in which they should behave according to God’s will.³³ The text begins with “And these words,” Keck indicates that this statement makes reference to the Ten Commandments and that the message is being offered to the “lay citizens of Israel” who are to provide these teachings in their home.³⁴ The people of Israel are being encouraged to teach, study,

²⁸ “Deuteronomy 6:6–9,” available from www.biblegateway.com; Internet; accessed on October 26, 2006.

²⁹ Eugene H. Merrill, *The New American Commentary, An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture NIV Text Volume 4* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1994), 23.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 22.

³¹ Christopher Wright, *New International Biblical Commentary Deuteronomy* (Peabody, MA: Henderickson Publishers, 1996), 1.

³² Merrill, *New American Commentary Volume 4*, 42.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ Leander Keck, *The New Interpreter’s Bible* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998), 342.

learn, and keep the Ten Commandments of God. The methodology that is suggested to help them keep the commandments has been the topic of many theologians. S.R. Driver suggests that Moses adapted these “new to the Hebrews” writing customs from the Egyptian society. He states,

The ancient Egyptians sometimes wrote a lucky sentence over the entrance of the house, for a favorable omen, as ‘the good abode,’ the munzel mobarak of the modern Arabs, or something similar; and the lintels and imposts of the doors, in the royal mansions, were frequently covered with hieroglyphics, containing the ovals and titles of the monarch.³⁵

Other theologians suggest that the text is purely symbolic. Miller writes, “Verses 8 and 9 maybe easily understood as indications of an external appropriation that makes this instruction second nature,”³⁶ suggesting to this researcher that the goal of the text is on loving God and not necessarily the method. Therefore, the church today should not allow itself to get frustrated with the methodology of using technology with traditional teaching methods. The church should focus more on the goal, which is loving God, because the method will be in a constant state of evolution, but the overall goal will be consistent.

Keck offers both a literal and metaphorical interpretation of the text. He indicates that the text literally means the Israelites are to put signs up by their doors and make reminders on their bodies. The author suggests that, during the time of the text, it was necessary to have these visible ways of reminding because the Israelites had to fight against the temptation of relying on “semi-magical practices.”³⁷ These semi-magical

³⁵ S.R. Driver, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Deuteronomy* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1906), 93.

³⁶ Patrick D. Miller, *Deuteronomy: Interpretation A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching* (Louisville: John Knox Press 1990), 104.

³⁷ Keck, *New Interpreter’s Bible*, 345.

practices were part of the society in which the Israelites were living. Moses understood that the people of Israel were forced to fight against the temptations of submitting to the norms of a culture that engaged in idolatry and polytheism. But he wanted to encourage them to not only make good choices in their lives, but also in the lives of the upcoming generations.³⁸ Deuteronomy 6:6-9 focuses on the boundaries and issues that God's people had to deal with in the midst of the society in which they were living. They are given a method of overcoming by obeying God's Ten Commandments from generation to generation.

Keck indicates that metaphorically the text means "the commandments are to be remembered at all times." They add in the discussion about Deuteronomy that the greatest command is to love God,³⁹ suggesting to this researcher that if they are to love God, they must be willing to do new things and "whatever is necessary" to instill teaching in all generations equipping them with the strength necessary not to succumb to the evils of the time in which they are living. Keck emphasizes that, although the outward teaching using the writings was "the method," the most important factor is the inward change of the heart.⁴⁰

Wright characterizes the book of Deuteronomy as a summary of Moses' teachings to the people of Israel before his death. He states, "Deuteronomy is a book for a people on the move, literally at first, spiritually and morally thereafter. It is set in Israel on the boundary of the land and looks beyond the boundary to what lies in store for Israel as it

³⁸ Merrill, *Commentary Volume 4*, 166.

³⁹ Keck, *New Interpreter's Bible*, 345.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 346.

moves into the future with God.”⁴¹ Therefore, Moses was not just teaching to effect change in the current lives of the people of Israel, he wanted to effect change in their entire future for generations to come by encouraging them to make godly choices in their lives. Wright adds that, “Deuteronomy bends every rhetorical, literary, emotional, and moral skill to the task of equipping and motivating God’s people to live for the purposes of God in each generation.”⁴² Moses was particularly interested in the teaching of the younger generations in the focal text.

Moses felt strongly about teaching the younger generation in that he seemed to have a “by any means necessary” perspective that was not customary for his time. He acknowledged the past failings of the older generation and indicated that they never saw the promised land. Moses did not want this to happen to yet another generation. He instructed the people of Israel to take serious heed to the words being spoken and to make them part of their everyday lives by hiding the words in their hearts. He indicates that this is a commandment, not just a suggestion as to how they should stress godly teaching to their children.⁴³ Moses wants them to make teaching part of their everyday lives and even encouraged them to make visual reminders, using writing in obscure places like their hands, foreheads, doorframes, and gates. Merrill indicates that the purpose of writing on the hands and the foreheads may have been to allow them to identify each other as keepers of God’s covenant. And, instead of writing on the forehead, it is referring to writing on a

⁴¹ Christopher Wright, *New International Biblical Commentary Deuteronomy* (Peabody, MA: Henderickson Publishers, 1996), 8.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 8.

⁴³ Merrill, *Commentary Volume 4*, 166.

headband that is placed on the forehead.⁴⁴ Moses wanted to provide creative ways to internalize the law into the minds and lifestyles of the people of Israel. This text can clearly be described as an action text because of the numerous verbs used within it.⁴⁵ Moses wants the people of Israel to take the necessary action to be good role models for their children and provide interesting unique methods of teachings.

This researcher believes it is the church's charge as Christians today to uphold the commandment of Moses to focus on teaching the younger generations about God and how they should live their lives. Just as Moses provided creative and innovative ways to provide visual stimuli that focused on teaching godly principles, the church today should also be creative and innovative in teaching in 2006. The church has access to more tools than just the writings that were available in the times of Moses. Moses was using inventive methodology for his time by writing in interesting and visually stimulating ways. Today, we have a wide variety of technology available that will also provide our younger generations with stimulation that will allow them to be taught about God.

Additional support for merging technology and Christian education as a means of reaching Generation X and beyond is found in Matthew chapter 9 verse 17. This parable provides support for Christian education programs to maintain some of the traditional teaching strategies, but also incorporate some new methods with the focus of gaining the greatest benefit for God. Matthew 9:17 states, "And no one puts new wine into old wineskins. The old skins would burst from the pressure, spilling the wine and ruining the skins. New wine must be stored in new wine skins. That way both the wine and the

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Wright, *Deuteronomy*, 100.

wineskins are preserved.”⁴⁶ The book of Matthew has been divided into several sections by some Bible scholars. The first section provides words and actions of John the Baptist in preparation for the public ministry of Christ (3: 4:11). The second section refers to the words and actions of Christ in Galilee (4:12-26:1). The third section focuses on Jesus’ suffering, death, resurrection and the Great Commission (28:16 – 20).⁴⁷

The gospel of Matthew is thought to have been written before 100 CE by an anonymous author.⁴⁸ Wikipedia reference book states,

Although the document is internally anonymous, the authorship of this Gospel is traditionally ascribed to St. Matthew, a tax collector who became an Apostle of Jesus. The early church fathers were unanimous in this view. Results of modern critical scholarship, however, have departed from that tradition, with the majority of scholars agreeing Matthew the Apostle was not the author of the Gospel which today bears his name.⁴⁹

This parable in the focal text refers to a symbolic relationship between new wine, old wine, wine skins, and old wine skins. Scholars have inquired about Jesus’ focus on wine and wineskin in the text. Davies and Allison indicate Jesus used the language and metaphors that were common to the people of that time.⁵⁰ These were examples that people of this time would readily understand. Wine skins were traditionally made out of

⁴⁶ Tom Wright, *Matthew for Everyone Part 1 Chapters 1-15* (London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002), 99-103.

⁴⁷ “Gospel of Matthew,” Wikipedia. Available from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gospel_of_Matthew; Internet; accessed October 26, 2006.

⁴⁸ Craig L. Blomberg, *The American Commentary: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture NIV Text. Matthew* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1992), 43.

⁴⁹ “Gospel of Matthew,” Wikipedia. Available from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gospel_of_Matthew; Internet; accessed October 26, 2006.

⁵⁰ W.D. Davies and Dale Allison, *The Gospel According To Saint Matthew* (Scotland: T&T Clark, 1999), 112-113.

leather skin and were easily cracked during the fermenting process because the grape juice would swell and stretch the wineskin.⁵¹

The focal text is found in a synoptic Gospel and similar versions of the text can be found in Mark 2:22 and Luke 5:37 in which almost the exact same wording is used.⁵²

However, Matthew provides a unique presentation of the text in reference to the wine and wineskin. Emphasis is made on preserving them both instead of one replacing the other.

Alexander analyzed the text by reporting,

Matthew sees Jesus as having brought something eschatologically new, not merely a remodeling or patching up the old. But, Jesus brings the eschatologically new in such a way that it does not do away with the old, but fulfills and preserves it . . . Matthew walks the dangerous line between old and new, affirming them both, sometimes being considered the enemy by both conservative and liberal, never smugly sure that he has chosen the right way, but knowing this is the life to which Jesus calls us and that we are not alone in it.⁵³

Davies and Allison support this perspective by indicating that, although the text supports discontinuity, it also emphasizes the importance of continuity. They also state, “The past is not to be forsaken but adopted and transformed.”⁵⁴ Technology will complete the same task in the transformation of Christian education, which will allow the past and present methods to be merged and will result in transforming Christian education, allowing for preservation and the spread of teaching about God.

⁵¹ *Nelson Bible Contemporary English Version* (Atlanta: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1995), 1189.

⁵² “New Wine into Old Wine Skin,” Wikipedia. Available from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gospel_of_Matthew; Internet; accessed October 26, 2006.

⁵³ Neil M. Alexander, *The New Interpreter's Bible Volume VIII* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995), 236.

⁵⁴ Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 112-113.

Scholars like Albright and Mann do not agree with the perspective that the last verse of the text was written to emphasize both the old and the new working together to create a new reality that preserves tradition. They suggest that the text that focuses on preserving is “either an editorial comment, or a misplaced saying from another context in an attempt to deal with the question.”⁵⁵ These authors do not accept the interpretation that the final text deals with preserving the old and the new.⁵⁶ However, this is not the most commonly accepted interpretation of the text.

McLaren made this statement regarding the text,

Jesus understood the intimate connection between the medium and message, the container and the content. He tells us a new container (wineskin) must bear with it new content (wine); so also old methods (worn garments) will retain an old message (worn patch). We evangelicals have long believed that the wineskins (our methods and media) must be constantly renewed and updated. But we may have missed the most dramatic point of this passage. The emphasis for Jesus is that the wine itself is new. Jesus came proclaiming a new message, not just new methods.⁵⁷

McLaren believes that what is most important is that a new type of message is presented in addition to new methodology, suggesting that the message the church is presenting should be appropriate and understandable to the individuals to whom they are communicating.⁵⁸

⁵⁵ Albright and Mann, *Matthew*, 108.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ McLaren, *Hidden Power*, 89.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

Other perspectives suggest that this text emphasizes that neither the new wine nor the old wine are superior to each other.⁵⁹ Michael Slaughter in his book, *Out on the Edge*, quotes Howard Snyder's interpretation of this text.

Every age knows the temptation to forget that the gospel is ever new. We try to contain the new wine of the gospel in old wineskins—outmoded tradition, obsolete philosophies, creaking institutions, old habits. But with time the old wineskins begin to bind the gospel. Then they must burst, the power of the gospel pours forth once more. Many times this has happened in the history of the Church. Human nature wants to conserve, but the divine nature is to renew. It seems almost a law that things initially created to aid the gospel eventually become obstacles—old wineskins.⁶⁰

It is this renewing component that is imperative to the growth and development of the church today. This researcher believes that technology will allow for this renewing process. Bloomberg suggests that, “one needs new containers that are more flexible. So too the new age Jesus inaugurates brings new practices appropriate to the changed circumstances.”⁶¹ Jesus adds that by utilizing the new we are also preserving the old. Bloomberg challenges Christian leaders to allow this text to be a catalyst for thinking critically if our traditional methods used in church are still appropriate and if it is the most effective method the current generation.⁶²

Slaughter makes the analogy of wine representing the core values of the church and the wineskins representing culture. He states that, “Our people often resist change because they fail to differentiate between the wine and the wineskins. They confuse core

⁵⁹ *The New Interpreter's Bible, Volume VIII* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995), 236.

⁶⁰ Slaughter, *Out on the Edge*, 56.

⁶¹ Craig L. Bloomberg, *The American Commentary An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture NIV Text. Matthew* (Nashville, Broadman Press, 1992), 159.

⁶² Bloomberg, *Matthew*, 159.

values with cultural practices.”⁶³ Using technology along with traditional teaching methodology does not change the message or the purpose of the church. It simply provides another medium to spread Christianity.

The truth of this text provides a foundation for the merging of technology into the traditional Christian education methodology. It is vital that both the old strategies of teaching and the new technology are preserved so that Christian education programs can continue to be effective and grow. This continuity between the old and the new will allow more individuals to be reached and transformed.⁶⁴ Wright suggests that sometimes this transformation can be uncomfortable for individuals.⁶⁵

Theological Foundation

Martin Luther, one of the most important theologians of the sixteenth century, held fast to the belief that religious material should be available in the language of the culture using the highest levels of technology available. Luther strongly believed that the process of change and growth was necessary because this was the catalyst for the Reformation that occurred between 1250 to 1550 C.E. The Reformation occurred because the late medieval church failed to provide a theological perspective and the spirituality that would meet the needs of people. Theologians like Luther believed that individuals should be empowered to think critically about the Biblical text. He strongly believed in the priesthood of all believers. This perspective embraced the belief that all believers had equal access to God and that no Christian was set above others. This alleviated church leaders as

⁶³ Slaughter, *Out on the Edge*, 56.

⁶⁴ Davies, and Allison, *Matthew*, 112.

⁶⁵ Wright, *Matthew for Everyone*, 103.

the sole or dominant interpreters of biblical truths.⁶⁶ The only way this would occur was if the information was available to all and individuals had the skills necessary to read. Luther thought that many of the church's practices, like the selling of indulgences, was no longer acceptable. The printing press allowed his message to be read throughout Europe.⁶⁷ Common people for the first time had the opportunity to study God's Word for themselves.

By the end of the 15th Century, printing presses were located in over 200 cities and during this same time a cheaper way of making paper was invented.⁶⁸ Michael Slaughter states, "Luther seized the medium and in doing so spoke the language of the culture."⁶⁹ Slaughter is referring to Luther's translation of the Bible into German. This new technology allowed about six million books to be printed and about half of these were on religious subjects. Ozment notes that more books were printed between 1460 and 1500 than were produced during the entire Middle Ages.⁷⁰ Prior to this time, it was the scribes and monks job to copy information by hand. This was an extremely long time consuming process that was also subject to error because of the many different people copying the information. Once written material was more readily available, there was an increase in the

⁶⁶ "Priesthood of all believers," Wikipedia. Available from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Priesthood_of_all_believers; Internet; accessed October 26, 2006. These authors state that, "The priesthood of all believers is a Protestant doctrine based on the First Epistle of Peter, 2:9: But you are not like that, for you are a chosen people. You are a kingdom of priests, God's holy nation, his very own possession. This is so you can show others the goodness of God, for he called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light."

⁶⁷ Steven Ozment, *The Age of Reform 1250-1550. An Intellectual and Religious History of Late Medieval and Reformation in Europe* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980), 199.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Slaughter, *Out On The Edge*, 25.

⁷⁰ Ozment, *Age of Reform*, 199.

number of individuals who learned to read.⁷¹ This new literary and information being more readily available brought more power to the people.⁷² However, the people now had to critically review all materials because both the kings and the religious leaders were trying to sway people to their perspective.⁷³ They were no longer bound to strictly one set of teachings although the church remained the authority on religious issues. Many of Luther's teachings focused on empowering those in need. He didn't just want to give money to the poor; he wanted to develop programs for rehabilitation and vocational training.⁷⁴ Luther believed that the church and the world must work hand in hand for the common good.⁷⁵

The Protestant Reformation utilized the tool of the latest technology, the printing press. Slaughter strongly believes that,

electronic media is to the reformation of the twenty-first century what the printing press was to the reformation of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. TV, having come of age in the 1950's, has changed the way we learn and our perceptions of what makes sense. The effective congregation of the twenty-first century will be part of the church that makes use of multimedia. The new reformation will speak the language of the culture and employ communication technology that shapes the culture.

He goes so far as to say that the media reformation is a life or death issue for the church because electronic media is the language of our culture."⁷⁶

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Slaughter, *Out on the Edge*, 25. Ozment, *Age of Reform*, 201. Ozment indicates that, "Like television in the modern world, the book and pamphlet became powerful tools of social and political change in the sixteenth century."

⁷³ Ozment, *Age of Reform*, 202.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 266.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Slaughter, *Out on the Edge*, 63.

In 1523, Luther wrote a document entitled *De Instituendis Ministris Ecclesiae* that discusses the development of ministries within the church. Luther indicates that all Christians within the church were priests according to God and that all Christians were called to minister the word of God. In this document, Luther states, "*ministerium verbi summum in Ecclesia officium esse prorsus unicum et omnibus commune, qui Christiani sunt, non modo iure, sed et praeceto.*" According to Lowell C. Green, this statement means that ministering the Word of God is the primary purpose of the Church. This is a purpose that all Christians can play a role in fulfilling. Christian education programming is one of the primary places within the church that individuals learn the skills necessary to be disciples.

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A qualitative and quantitative research methodology was utilized to analyze data from this research project. The research project entailed designing, implementing, and analyzing the results of a model for training Christian education leaders at St. Paul AMEC in Columbus, Ohio to merge technology with Christian education as a means equipping the Christian education department with the skills needed to reach Generation X at St. Paul AMEC in Columbus, Ohio.

Statement of the Problem

The Christian education department at St. Paul AMEC in Columbus, Ohio has the ultimate charge of teaching all ages of individuals that are members of the church. Unfortunately, the Christian education department has not made any changes in their teaching strategies and the result is that they only have a low percentage of Generation X attending their programming. This problem extends beyond St. Paul AMEC and has been

noted as an issue nationally.¹ Members of Generation X are known to be a technology-based generation and are accustomed to visually and auditory stimulating information.²

Hypothesis

The researcher believed that, if Christian educators at St. Paul AMEC were trained to merge technology and traditional Christian education teaching methods, they would be empowered and inspired to use the technology in their Christian education programming to enhance the spiritual growth of members of Generation X.

Participants

The subjects in this study were recruited from the leaders in the Christian education department at St. Paul AMEC in Columbus, Ohio. The 14 leaders for the Christian education department at St. Paul AMEC were sent letters requesting that they engage in a research project. All 14 leaders responded to the letter with 4 being unable to attend due to prior commitments and ten volunteering to be a part of this study. The ten participants committed to attending to each of the training modules by signing a commitment letter agreeing to engage in the entire research study.³

Description of Methodology

The ten participants who returned their letters of commitment (Appendix A) were then each sent forms to provide the researcher with background information (Appendix

¹ Schieber and Olson, *What Next*, 5.

² Ibid.

³ Appendix A.

B). The researcher assigned numbers to each of the participants to ensure anonymity. There were no identifiers that would link a specific participant to a data sheet or survey response form. The background data sheets provided the researcher with demographic data and provided information regarding current levels of perceived proficiency in using various types of technology.⁴ The data regarding the participant's perceived levels of proficiency for using technology was used in conjunction with research information on skills needed to effectively use technology in the church and models of traditional methods of teaching Christian education and perceptions about technology and Christian education. Based on this information, eight training modules were developed which included:

Module 1: Need for technology: This module provided the foundation for the need for Christian Educators to embrace the use of technology to facilitate learning and gave background information regarding members of Generation X.

Module 2: Overview of the types of technology: This module provided an overview of the various types of technology that can be used to enhance Christian education's traditional teaching methods.

Module 3: Overview of searching for the right technology: This module taught the participants how to select and purchase/rent the correct type of technology based on the budget and church involvement.

Module 4: Overview of Production: This module taught the participants how to create a storyboard based on scripture or a theme for Christian education that will entail the use of some type of technology.

Module 5: Overview of PowerPoint: This module taught the participants how to use PowerPoint to create presentations.

Module 6: Overview of audio equipment training. This module taught individuals how to effectively use audio equipment for recording, playing, and dubbing. Additionally, it taught how to transfer this information onto computer programs.

⁴ Appendix B.

Module 7: Overview of Video. This module taught various means of attaining images from various types of technology sources that can be projected based on specific themes.

Module 8: Overview of preparing for the presentation. This module taught the process of planning, distributing, and presenting information using technology to ensure that everything is working

The modules all consisted of the following format: prayer, teaching session that demonstrated various ways of merging technology with traditional Christian education teaching methods, teaching session for module topics, and actual handling of equipment when appropriate, break-out sessions to apply learning, and closing prayer.⁵ The eight modules were two hours and thirty minutes in length, which included one 15-minute break. The researcher designed the teaching session demonstrations of merging technology with traditional teaching methods for each module by using familiar biblical scriptures, prayers, and songs as a bridge to make the transition into using more technology easier for the subjects. Upon completion of the module themes and the lesson plans for each module, the researcher developed pre- and post test Likert scale survey instruments that were used to measure status, learning, and perceptions of the participants. The survey questions were designed to specifically determine data that was pertinent for the current study as they applied to the participants experience at St. Paul AMEC. The pre-test survey instrument was administered to each participant prior to any training being completed (Appendix C). The post-test survey was administered after all training was completed (Appendix D). Throughout the project, the researcher videotaped the modules and documented comments made by the participants.

⁵ Appendix C.

Location and Equipment

The research study was conducted at Teach Enterprises located one block from St. Paul AMEC in Columbus, Ohio. This site was chosen because of its design and computer lab that was available for the breakout sessions. The equipment utilized in this study was from Team Omega, Inc., a multimedia company located in Columbus, Ohio. This company allowed the researcher to use the following equipment: projection screens, DV cameras, soundboards, computers, graphic programs, speakers, and LCD projector throughout this research project.

Data Analysis

The data collected from the background information data sheet and the participant pre and post test surveys were analyzed using quantitative and qualitative analysis.

CHAPTER FIVE

FIELD EXPERIENCE

Participant Background Information (Appendix E)

Seventy percent of the participants were female (7) and thirty percent were male (3). The participants ages ranged from the following: 12-16 years old (0%), 17-21 years old (10%), 22-35 years old (20%), 36-46 years old (20%), 47-60 (50%), and 61-75 years old (0%). The educational levels of the participants were as follows: below high school (10%), high school/general equivalent diploma (10%), college degree (70%), and graduate degree (10%). Participants reported their number of years of involvement in the life of St. Paul AMEC as 2-5 years (10%), 6-10 years (20%), 11-16 years (0%), 17-25 years (0%), 26-30 years (0%), and 31-35 years (20%). The participants were asked which Christian education ministries they were involved in (e.g., youth ministry, music ministry, bible study, publication ministry, vacation bible school, etc.) 100% of the participants indicated that they were involved in at least two. Fifty percent of the subjects indicated that they were involved in at least four of the Christian education ministries. One hundred percent of the participants completed the entire research project by attending all of the training modules.

Participant Computer/Technology Background Information

Participants were asked to rate their overall computer knowledge on a Likert scale of one to ten. One indicated that they had no knowledge and ten indicated that they perceived themselves to be experts. Their responses indicated that 10% rated 2, 10% rated 4, 40% rated 5, 30% rated 7, and 10 percent rated 9. One hundred percent of the participants indicated that they had access to computers at home, work, or school. Participants responded to the question asking the number of hours they spent using a computer each week the results were as follows: 10% indicated 0-2 hours per week, 20% indicated 3-5 hours per week, 50% indicated 6-10 hours per week, and 20% indicated more than 10 hours per week. Participants responded to the question asking about computer use. Their responses indicated that 90% email, 80% word processing, 10% for spreadsheets, 10% audio/video editing, and 30% entering data into databases. Participants indicated that 100% of them had computers at home (90% Personal Computers and 10% Macintosh). Ten percent of the participants indicated that they had taken a technology/multimedia class and 90% indicated that they had not had any classes. The participant who had taken a class took the class more than 24 months prior to the current study.

Background Information Specific to Christian Education

Participants indicated that 40% had used technology within Christian education programming and 60% had not used technology. The participants who reported using technology at St. Paul AMEC indicated that they used it three to four times for videotaping, five or more for audio, five or more for music, and three to four for digital

camera. Participants who had not used technology at St. Paul AMEC indicated the following reasons for lack of use: one participant did not see the value, four participants indicated that they were not trained, and one indicated lack of equipment. The participants were asked if there had ever been a time in which they thought the use of technology would have benefited one of the Christian education programs in which they had been involved and it was not used. Ninety percent of the participants indicated yes and ten percent of the participants indicated no. Participants were asked if they thought the Christian education department needs to embrace the use of technology. Ninety percent indicated yes and ten percent indicated no. The participants responded to a question regarding their perception of the least represented population in Christian education programming at St. Paul AMEC. The participants indicated the following: 0% youth 0-6 years old, 0% youth 7-15 years old, 10% youth 16-21 years old, 70% young adults 22-35 years old, 20% adults 36-45 years old, 0% adults 46-60 years old, and 0% adults 61 and above. Finally, the participants were asked what generation they thought would benefit the most from the use of technology in Christian education programming at St. Paul AMEC. The participants indicated the following: 10% youth 0-6 years old, 20% youth 7-15 years old, 30% youth 16-21 years old, 20% young adults 22-35 years old, 10% adults 36-45 years old, 10% adults 46-60 years old, and 0% adults 61 and above.

Pre-Test Survey Data (Appendix F)

The pre-test survey consisted of sixteen questions to which the subjects responded using a Likert scale from one (i.e., novice) to eight (i.e., expert) for all questions. Question one of the survey asked participants about their understanding of the methodology for approaching visual communications including: pre-production,

production, and elements of good design. The participants indicated on the range from one to eight (i.e., one indicating novice and eight indicating expert): 40% reported 1, 20% reported 2, 20% reported 3, 10% reported 4, 0% reported 5, 0% reported 6, 10% reported 7, and 0% reported 8.

Question two of the survey inquired about the participants' understanding of how to use the components of a basic digital photo camera. The participants indicated on the range from one to eight (i.e., one indicating novice and eight indicating expert): 10% reported 1, 0% reported 2, 20% reported 3, 0% reported 4, 0% reported 5, 30% reported 6, 30% reported 7, and 10% reported 8.

Question three of the survey inquired about the participants' understanding of how resolution affects quality of video image. The participants indicated on the range from one to eight (i.e., one indicating novice and eight indicating expert): 40% reported 1, 30% reported 2, 20% reported 3, 0% reported 4, 0% reported 5, 0% reported 6, 0% reported 7, and 10% reported 8.

Question four of the survey inquired about the participants' understanding of video formats (e.g., digital 8, super VHS, HD, film). The participants indicated on the range from one to eight (i.e., one indicating novice and eight indicating expert): 80% reported 1, 10% reported 2, 0% reported 3, 0% reported 4, 0% reported 5, 10% reported 6, 0% reported 7, and 0% reported 8.

Question five of the survey inquired about the participants' understanding of the use of video camera accessories. The participants indicated on the range from one to eight (i.e., one indicating novice and eight indicating expert): 10% reported 1, 40% reported 2, 20% reported 3, 0% reported 4, 10% reported 5, 10% reported 6, 10% reported 7, and 0% reported 8.

Question six inquired about the participants' understanding of lighting basics. The participants indicated on the range from one to eight (i.e., one indicating novice and eight indicating expert): 10% reported 1, 40% reported 2, 20% reported 3, 0% reported 4, 20% reported 5, 0% reported 6, 10% reported 7, and 0% reported 8.

Question seven inquired about the participants' understanding of sound as a system. The participants indicated on the range from one to eight (i.e., one indicating novice and eight indicating expert): 40% reported 1, 20% reported 2, 20% reported 3, 10% reported 4, 0% reported 5, 0% reported 6, 0% reported 7, and 10% reported 8.

Question eight inquired about the participants' understanding of the components of a sound system. The participants indicated on the range from one to eight (i.e., one indicating novice and eight indicating expert): 20% reported 1, 60% reported 2, 0% reported 3, 10% reported 4, 0% reported 5, 0% reported 6, 0% reported 7, and 10% reported 8.

Question nine inquired about the participants' understanding of the five basic elements of design. The participants indicated on the range from one to eight (i.e., one indicating novice and eight indicating expert): 50% reported 1, 30% reported 2, 0% reported 3, 0% reported 4, 10% reported 5, 0% reported 6, 10% reported 7, and 0% reported 8.

Question ten inquired about the participants' understanding of the process of developing a graphic design. The participants indicated on the range from one to eight (i.e., one indicating novice and eight indicating expert): 40% reported 1, 40% reported 2, 0% reported 3, 10% reported 4, 0% reported 5, 10% reported 6, 0% reported 7, and 0% reported 8.

Question eleven inquired about the participants' understanding of how to develop a basic PowerPoint presentation. The participants indicated on the range from one to eight (i.e., one indicating novice and eight indicating expert): 10% reported 1, 20% reported 2, 0% reported 3, 40% reported 4, 0% reported 5, 0% reported 6, 30% reported 7, and 0% reported 8.

Question twelve inquired about the participants' understanding of how to combine multimedia (e.g., putting a video into PowerPoint) for a presentation. The participants indicated on the range from one to eight (i.e., one indicating novice and eight indicating expert): 60% reported 1, 20% reported 2, 0% reported 3, 10% reported 4, 0% reported 5, 0% reported 6, 10% reported 7, and 0% reported 8.

Question thirteen inquired about the participants' understanding of the process of editing when incorporating video, sound and graphics into a presentation. The participants indicated on the range from one to eight (i.e., one indicating novice and eight indicating expert): 90% reported 1, 0% reported 2, 0% reported 3, 10% reported 4, 0% reported 5, 0% reported 6, 0% reported 7, and 0% reported 8.

Question fourteen inquired about the participants' understanding of the process of distributing and/ or presenting a finished product to the church. The participants indicated on the range from one to eight (i.e., one indicating novice and eight indicating expert): 80% reported 1, 10% reported 2, 0% reported 3, 10% reported 4, 0% reported 5, 0% reported 6, 0% reported 7, and 0% reported 8.

Question fifteen inquired about the participants' motivation to use technology within Christian education programming. The participants indicated on the range from one to eight (i.e., one indicating novice and eight indicating expert): 10% reported 1, 30%

reported 2, 0% reported 3, 50% reported 4, 0% reported 5, 0% reported 6, 0% reported 7, and 10% reported 8.

Question sixteen inquired about the participants' perception of being equipped to use technology within Christian education programming. The participants indicated on the range from one to eight (i.e., one indicating novice and eight indicating expert): 70% reported 1, 10% reported 2, 0% reported 3, 10% reported 4, 0% reported 5, 0% reported 6, 10% reported 7, and 0% reported 8.

Post-Test Survey Data (Appendix F)

The post-test survey contained the exact same questions from the pre-test survey, which consisted of sixteen questions in which the subjects responded to using a Likert scale from one (i.e., novice to eight (i.e., expert) for all questions.

Question one of the survey asked participants about their understanding of the methodology for approaching visual communications including: pre-production, production, and elements of good design. The participants indicated on the range from one to eight (i.e., one indicating novice and eight indicating expert): 0% reported 1, 0% reported 2, 0% reported 3, 40% reported 4, 10% reported 5, 40% reported 6, 10% reported 7, and 0% reported 8.

Question two of the survey inquired about the participants' understanding of how to use the components of a basic digital photo camera. The participants indicated on the range from one to eight (i.e., one indicating novice and eight indicating expert): 0% reported 1, 0% reported 2, 0% reported 3, 10% reported 4, 0% reported 5, 40% reported 6, 40% reported 7, and 10% reported 8.

Question three of the survey inquired about the participants' understanding of how resolution affects quality of video image. The participants indicated on the range from one to eight (i.e., one indicating novice and eight indicating expert): 0% reported 1, 0% reported 2, 10% reported 3, 40% reported 4, 10% reported 5, 20% reported 6, 10% reported 7, and 10% reported 8.

Question four of the survey inquired about the participants' understanding of video formats (e.g., digital 8, super VHS, HD, film). The participants indicated on the range from one to eight (i.e., one indicating novice and eight indicating expert): 0% reported 1, 0% reported 2, 0% reported 3, 80% reported 4, 0% reported 5, 10% reported 6, 10% reported 7, and 0% reported 8.

Question five of the survey inquired about the participants' understanding of the use of video camera accessories. The participants indicated on the range from one to eight (i.e., one indicating novice and eight indicating expert): 0% reported 1, 0% reported 2, 10% reported 3, 0% reported 4, 60% reported 5, 20% reported 6, 10% reported 7, and 0% reported 8.

Question six inquired about the participants' understanding of lighting basics. The participants indicated on the range from one to eight (i.e., one indicating novice and eight indicating expert): 0% reported 1, 0% reported 2, 10% reported 3, 10% reported 4, 10% reported 5, 60% reported 6, 10% reported 7, and 0% reported 8.

Question seven inquired about the participants' understanding of sound as a system. The participants indicated on the range from one to eight (i.e., one indicating novice and eight indicating expert): 0% reported 1, 0% reported 2, 0% reported 3, 10% reported 4, 50% reported 5, 20% reported 6, 10% reported 7, and 10% reported 8.

Question eight inquired about the participants' understanding of the components of a sound system. The participants indicated on the range from one to eight (i.e., one indicating novice and eight indicating expert): 0% reported 1, 0% reported 2, 0% reported 3, 0% reported 4, 60% reported 5, 20% reported 6, 10% reported 7, and 10% reported 8.

Question nine inquired about the participants' understanding of the five basic elements of design. The participants indicated on the range from one to eight (i.e., one indicating novice and eight indicating expert): 0% reported 1, 0% reported 2, 10% reported 3, 0% reported 4, 80% reported 5, 0% reported 6, 10% reported 7, and 10% reported 8.

Question ten inquired about the participants' understanding of the process of developing a graphic design. The participants indicated on the range from one to eight (i.e., one indicating novice and eight indicating expert): 0% reported 1, 0% reported 2, 0% reported 3, 20% reported 4, 50% reported 5, 20% reported 6, 10% reported 7, and 0% reported 8.

Question eleven inquired about the participants' understanding of how to develop a basic PowerPoint presentation. The participants indicated on the range from one to eight (i.e., one indicating novice and eight indicating expert): 0% reported 1, 0% reported 2, 0% reported 3, 10% reported 4, 20% reported 5, 30% reported 6, 0% reported 7, and 40% reported 8.

Question twelve inquired about the participants' understanding of how to combine multimedia (e.g., putting a video into PowerPoint) for a presentation. The participants indicated on the range from one to eight (i.e., one indicating novice and eight indicating expert): 0% reported 1, 0% reported 2, 0% reported 3, 0% reported 4, 10% reported 5, 80% reported 6, 10% reported 7, and 0% reported 8.

Question thirteen inquired about the participants' understanding of the process of editing when incorporating video, sound and graphics into a presentation. The participants indicated on the range from one to eight (i.e., one indicating novice and eight indicating expert): 0% reported 1, 0% reported 2, 0% reported 3, 0% reported 4, 80% reported 5, 10% reported 6, 10% reported 7, and 0% reported 8.

Question fourteen inquired about the participants' understanding of the process of distributing and/ or presenting a finished product to the church. The participants indicated on the range from one to eight (i.e., one indicating novice and eight indicating expert): 0% reported 1, 0% reported 2, 0% reported 3, 0% reported 4, 10% reported 5, 90% reported 6, 0% reported 7, and 0% reported 8.

Question fifteen inquired about the participants' motivation to use technology within Christian education programming. The participants indicated on the range from one to eight (i.e., one indicating novice and eight indicating expert): 0% reported 1, 0% reported 2, 0% reported 3, 0% reported 4, 0% reported 5, 0% reported 6, 0% reported 7, and 100% reported 8.

Question sixteen inquired about the participants' perception of being equipped to use technology within Christian education programming. The participants indicated on the range from one to eight (i.e., one indicating novice and eight indicating expert): 0% reported 1, 0% reported 2, 0% reported 3, 0% reported 4, 0% reported 5, 80% reported 6, 10% reported 7, and 10% reported 8.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, REFLECTIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS

St. Paul AMEC is an inner city church located in Columbus, Ohio. This project was designed to equip, empower, and motivate Christian educators at St. Paul AMEC in Columbus, Ohio to merge technology with traditional Christian education techniques as a means of reaching out to Generation X and beyond. St. Paul has maintained a consistent membership for Sunday morning worship services over the last few years. However, the number of members, especially young adults, who have been participating in Christian education programming, has dramatically declined. This researcher proposed that the Christian education department in St. Paul AMEC, much like Christian education programs in most churches, has not embraced the merging of technology with traditional Christian education teaching strategies as a means of reaching members of Generation X and others. It was suggested that, if technology is incorporated in the church, not only will members of Generation X be more attracted to programming, but other members of the church will also increase membership in the Christian education programming.

Members of Generation X have been considered the most “unchurched” generation in America. So, it is imperative that the church makes modifications to its programming to become more relevant and attractive to this generation, so that they will not be lost. Research has shown that members of Generation X have their lives filled with technology in their use of cell phones, computers, ipods, and personal digital assistants (PDAs). New

technology devices are constantly being developed, modified, and improved allowing them to be accessible in the workplace, school, banks, coffee shops, bookstores, at home and in churches. Generation X members have become accustomed to flashy screens, sound effects, and information being presented to them in various modes (i.e., visual and auditory). Unfortunately, the church is often the last place to embrace the new technology of the time. Therefore, Generation X members often find themselves lost and uninterested in how information is presented. Jesus' model is that we make the gospel relevant to every individual. He used diverse and relevant means to convey the Christian message to others as found in Deuteronomy 6:6-9. Jesus also emphasized preserving the old and new tradition as found in Matthew 9:17.

Designing the modules was challenging for the researcher due to the diverse group of individuals who were a part of the study. The researcher had to ensure throughout the teaching aspect of the modules that everyone had a clear understanding of the information being presented. It was noted that the hands-on portions of the modules were extremely beneficial in making the learning more concrete for the participants. Additionally, the opening teaching sessions using technology sparked their interest for each module and prepared them for what was going to be taught for that module. It was apparent from the responsiveness and attentiveness of the subjects that using the bridge of familiar scriptures, prayers, and songs in the teaching demonstration at the outset of the modules allowed them to transition into using the technology more easily.

The analysis of data from this research study indicated that the eight training modules were effective means of equipping and motivating the Christian educators at St. Paul AMEC to begin merging technology with traditional teaching methods. The participants were provided with examples and were taught the basic skills necessary to

effectively use technology in their Christian education department. Once the participants were able to interact with the various pieces of equipment, they felt better equipped to use the technology.

The participants had a lot of questions and wanted to delve deeper into several of the presented areas. Time was a limitation of this study and only basic information could be presented. Each one of the modules could have been an entire month of classes for the participants. The researcher believes that the hands-on aspect of the training modules made the participants feel more comfortable using various pieces of equipment, like soundboards, cameras, and video cameras. The participants were often surprised at how well they took shots with the video camera and how easily a simple activity like photography could enhance a scriptural theme.

The participants of the research study were extremely excited about participating in each of the modules. Their excitement was demonstrated by their early arrival to the modules, bringing friends to observe the modules, active participation in the modules, and, at the end of the training modules, asking to have additional classes.¹ The researcher had the misperception prior to doing this study that the Christian education leaders would not have this level of interest. It appeared from their responses that there were two basic hindrances to them using equipment: training and availability of equipment. The issue of availability of equipment frustrated many of the participants. They wanted to immediately utilize the skills that they had learned. Unfortunately, St. Paul AMEC's building addition was not completed at the time of study as the researcher thought it would be. The building

¹ William R. Myers, *Research in Ministry a Primer for the Doctor of Ministry Program* (Chicago: Exploration Press, 2000), 37. This data was gathered through field notes. Myers states, "Field notes are written, typed or taped observations made by the D. Min student concerning what has occurred in specific settings within the context of the D.Min. students project."

addition is designed to have a state of the art multimedia center with the latest equipment available. Therefore, access to equipment was a major issue for participants in the study and would likely be an issue for other churches that replicated the study. The researcher and the participants were very interested in ways in which they could overcome some of these limitations. Several of the participants indicated that many church members had access to multimedia equipment and various technologies in their business and social organizations. It was suggested that the church make a directory of members within the church that have multimedia equipment and were willing to allow others in the church to use them. Additionally, local places that allow rental of equipment were also presented.

The participants within the study were so excited about the information they learned that they asked to be guided in making their own short film emphasizing prayer. The participants wrote the scripts, created a storyboard, created sound effects, acted out the scenes, shot the scenes, edited the footage, and imported the sound effects into the final footage.

A limitation of this study is that the researcher will not be able to immediately assess whether the participants turn their new skills and enthusiasm into action by implementing what they learned in Christian education programming. Although the researcher was able to affirm that the research project motivated, empowered, and equipped Christian educators at St. Paul AMEC, the researcher was not immediately able to see if the change in teaching would actually have the positive result of actually increasing the number of Generation X members who engage in the Christian education department programs at St. Paul AMEC. This researcher recommends that, if this study is replicated, a longitudinal study be completed after the training modules are completed to determine the effectiveness of the training.

Several additional limitations of this study were inherent in its design, according to Campbell and Stanley. First, they indicate that the researcher cannot measure the effects of other outside factors that may have affected the participants between the modules. They indicate another factor that could not be measured is client fatigue, which may have had an effect on learning. Secondly, they suggest that the simple fact that the researcher used a pre-test and post-test model tended to yield growth effects on the second test, especially when the same test is used. Finally, the small sample size makes it difficult to make accurate generalizations to larger populations.²

Miller states, “The future is now. Our world has changed. Even the dynamics of change have changed—and like it or not we are all along for the ride.”³ Therefore, Christian education should be prepared to be in a constant state of evolution in methodology of teaching. Technology is the way currently, however in the future it could be some other means. The researcher believes that the best practice would be for the church stay abreast of the trends and tools being used in society. Then, determine if these tools could enhance spreading the word about God. If so, then the church needs to train and prepare itself to use whatever is the most effective tool based on the individuals they are serving. As demonstrated in this study, it is important to utilize bridges to assist individuals’ transition from traditional to modern means of transmitting information.

² Donald T. Campbell and Julian C. Stanley, *Experimental and Quasi-experimental Designs for Research* (Chicago: Rand McNally and Company, 1963), 7-9.

³ M. Rex Miller, *The Millennium Matrix: Reclaiming the Past Reframing the Future of the Church* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004), ix.

APPENDIX A
PERMISSION FORM

February 3, 2005

To: Members of the Christian Education Department

From: Rev. Ruth McCants

Subject: Participant Consent Form

Dear Christian Education Department Leader:

You are invited to participate in an action research project being implemented to provide training focusing on "Merging Technology and Christian Education: A Method for Reaching Generation X." Given your role and involvement in the Christian Education Program at St. Paul A.M.E. Church, you will bring unique insights that will prove invaluable to this innovative research.

The researcher will be completing this project as a part of the requirement for the Doctor of Ministry degree at United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio. Data will be collected as a part of this project and the information gathered will become a part of a document that is available to the public.

Participation in this project is totally voluntary. Your personal identity will remain confidential. If you agree to participate, the project requires that you attend eight training modules training sessions and complete survey/questionnaire forms. These training sessions will be start on February 18, 2006 at 9:30AM. The Classes will take place in the TEACH building located at 731 East Broad Street (near St. Paul AMEC) The data and results of this study will be available to all of the participants upon completion of this entire project. The researcher will also be available to discuss results with participants upon request.

I appreciate your willingness to consider this invitation. Please indicate your decision by completing the form below and it to the St. Paul AMEC office.

Rev. Ruth McCants
St. Paul AME Church

☐ I agree to participate in the project and will complete all the requirements for the project. _____

☐ I do not agree to participate in this project _____

APPENDIX B
DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Merging Technology and Christian Education:

A Method for Reaching Generation X

Demographic Data:

Sex:

Female

Male

Age:

12-16

17-21

22-35

36-45

46- 60

61-75

**What Christian education ministry have you participated in or do you participate:
Circle all that apply.**

Youth Ministry

Music Ministry

Bible Study

Missionary

Lay ministry

Publication Ministry

Christian Education

Other please specify _____

Education:

Below High School

H.S/GED

College Degree

Graduate Degree

Other

please specify: _____

Number of Years involved in the church life of St. Paul:

0-1

2-5

6-10

11-16

17-25

26-30

Other Please specify

Background Information

How often have you used technology within Christian Education programming within the church?

Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Frequently

If you have not used technology in the church why have you not?

Circle all that apply

Breaks tradition

You do not see the value

You are not trained

You have not

had the opportunity

Other please specify: _____

Has there ever been a time in which you believe that technology would have benefited one of the Christian education ministries in which you have been apart of and it was not used?

Yes or No

Do you think that the Christian education programming in the church needs to embrace technology?

Yes or No

What Generation of People Do you think are the least represented in church?

None at all Youth 0-6 youth 7-15 youth 16-21 young adults 22-35 adults 36- 45
adults 46-60 adults 61 and above

What Generation of People Do you think the use of Technology will benefit the most?

None at all Youth 0-6 youth 7-15 youth 16-21 young adults 22-35 adults 36-45
adults 46-60 adults 61 and above

How would you rate your overall computer knowledge?

No knowledge 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Expert

Where do you have access to computers? Circle all that apply.

Home work school other (please specify) _____

What are the total amount of hours a week that you spend using the computer?

0-2 3-5 6-10 more than ten

What type of computer do you have at home? Circle all that apply.

Mac PC other (please specify) _____ Don't Have

What types of programs are you familiar with? Circle all that apply.

Presentation Word-processing Spreadsheet Audio/video editing
database

If you have taken technology/multimedia classes how long ago has it been since you took the class?

0- 6 months 7-12 months 13-24 months More than 24 months
N/A

What do you typically use the computer for?

eMail word processing presentations internet surfing other (please specify)

APPENDIX C
PRE-TEST FORM

Merging Technology and Christian Education:

A Method for Reaching Generation X and Beyond

Doctoral Research Project by: Rev. Ruth McCants

Participant Evaluation Pre-Test

Instructions: We are interested in knowing your understanding before taking the training modules. Please circle the best response.

Sample: How would you rate your understanding of the process, procedures, and requirements for completing a video production?

Novice	<u>1</u>	2	3	4	5	6	7	<u>8</u>	Expert
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1. Your understanding of the methodology for approaching visual communications including: pre-production, production, and elements of good design.

Novice	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	<u>8</u>	Expert
--------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----------	--------

2. Your understanding of how to use a digital photo camera.

Novice	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	<u>8</u>	Expert
--------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----------	--------

3. Your understanding of how resolution affects quality of video image

Novice	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	<u>8</u>	Expert
--------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----------	--------

4. Your understanding of video formats (e.g., digital 8, super VHS, HD, Film)

Novice	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	<u>8</u>	Expert
--------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----------	--------

5. Your understanding of video camera accessories.

Novice	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	<u>8</u>	Expert
--------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----------	--------

6. Your understanding of lighting basics.

Novice	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	<u>8</u>	Expert
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7. Your understanding of the sound as a system.
 Novice 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Expert
8. Your understanding of components of a sound system.
 Novice 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Expert
9. Your understanding of the five basic elements of design.
 Novice 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Expert
10. Your understanding of the process of developing a graphic design.
 Novice 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Expert
11. Your understanding of how to develop a basic PowerPoint presentation.
 Novice 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Expert
12. Your understanding of how to combine multimedia
 (e.g., putting video into PowerPoint)
 Novice 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Expert
13. Your understanding of the process of editing when incorporating video, sound
 and graphics into a presentation.
 Novice 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Expert
14. Your understanding of the process for distributing and/or presenting a finished
 product to your church.
 Novice 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Expert
15. Your motivation to use technology within the church after being a part of this study.
 Novice 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Expert
16. Your perception to of being equipped to use technology CE program.
 Novice 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Expert

APPENDIX D
POST-TEST FORM

Merging Technology and Christian Education:

A Method for Reaching Generation X

Doctoral Research Project by: Rev. Ruth McCants

Participant Evaluation Post Test

Instructions: We are interested in knowing how helpful this course has been to you. We would like to measure your responses to the questions after taking the training modules. Please circle the best response.

Sample: How would you rate your understanding of the process, procedures, and requirements for completing a video production?

Novice	<u>1</u>	2	3	4	5	6	7	<u>8</u>	Expert
--------	----------	---	---	---	---	---	---	----------	--------

1. Your understanding of the methodology for approaching visual communications including: pre-production, production, and elements of good design.

Novice	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	<u>8</u>	Expert
--------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----------	--------

2. Your understanding of how to use a digital photo camera.

Novice	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	<u>8</u>	Expert
--------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----------	--------

3. Your understanding of how resolution affects quality of video image

Novice	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	<u>8</u>	Expert
--------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----------	--------

4. Your understanding of video formats (e.g., digital 8, super VHS, HD, Film)

Novice	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	<u>8</u>	Expert
--------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----------	--------

5. Your understanding of video camera accessories.

Novice	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	<u>8</u>	Expert
--------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----------	--------

6. Your understanding of lighting basics.

Novice	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	<u>8</u>	Expert
--------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----------	--------

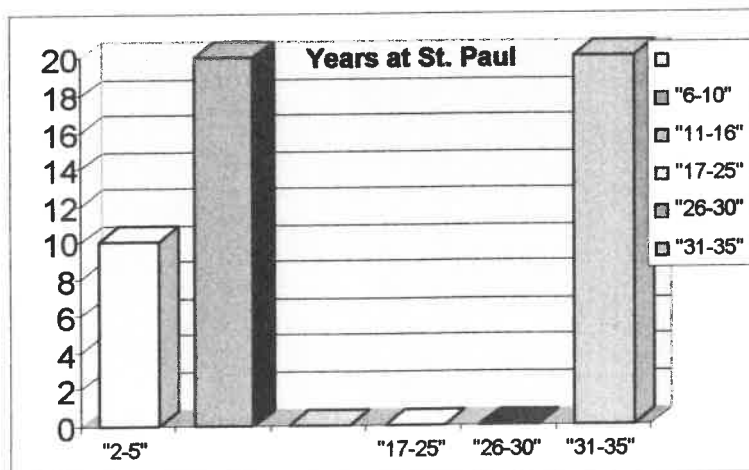
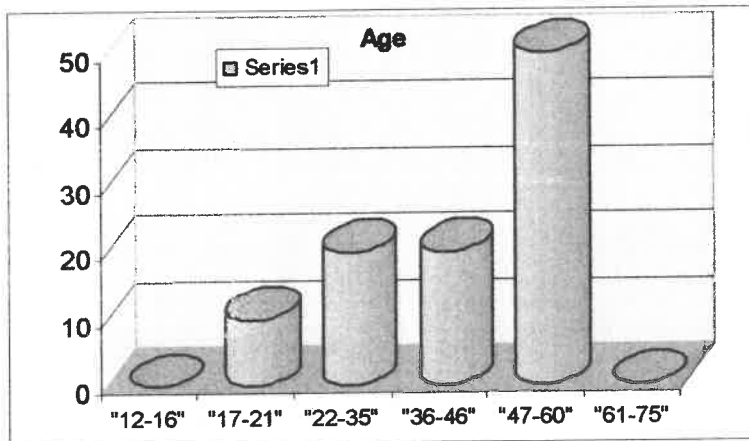
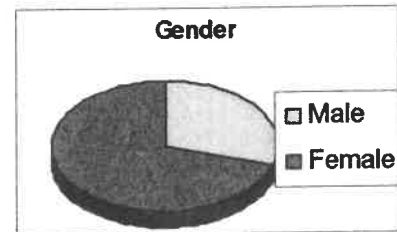
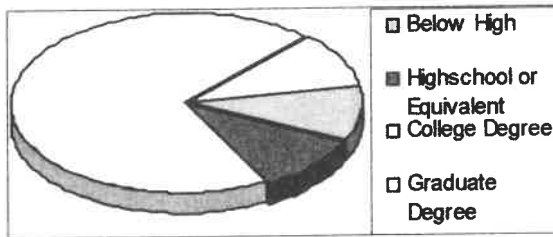
7. Your understanding of the sound as a system.
 Novice 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Expert
8. Your understanding of components of a sound system.
 Novice 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Expert
9. Your understanding of the five basic elements of design.
 Novice 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Expert
10. Your understanding of the process of developing a graphic design.
 Novice 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Expert
11. Your understanding of how to develop a basic PowerPoint presentation.
 Novice 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Expert
12. Your understanding of how to combine multimedia
 (e.g., putting video into PowerPoint)
 Novice 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Expert
13. Your understanding of the process of editing when incorporating video, sound
 and graphics into a presentation.
 Novice 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Expert
14. Your understanding of the process for distributing and/or presenting a finished
 product to your church.
 Novice 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Expert
15. Your motivation to use technology within the church after being a part of this study.
 Novice 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Expert
16. Your perception to of being equipped to use technology CE program.
 Novice 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Expert

APPENDIX E
DEMOGRAPHIC DATA RESULTS

Merging Technology and Christian Education: A Method for Reaching Generation X

Doctoral Research Project by: Rev. Ruth McCants

Demographic Information:

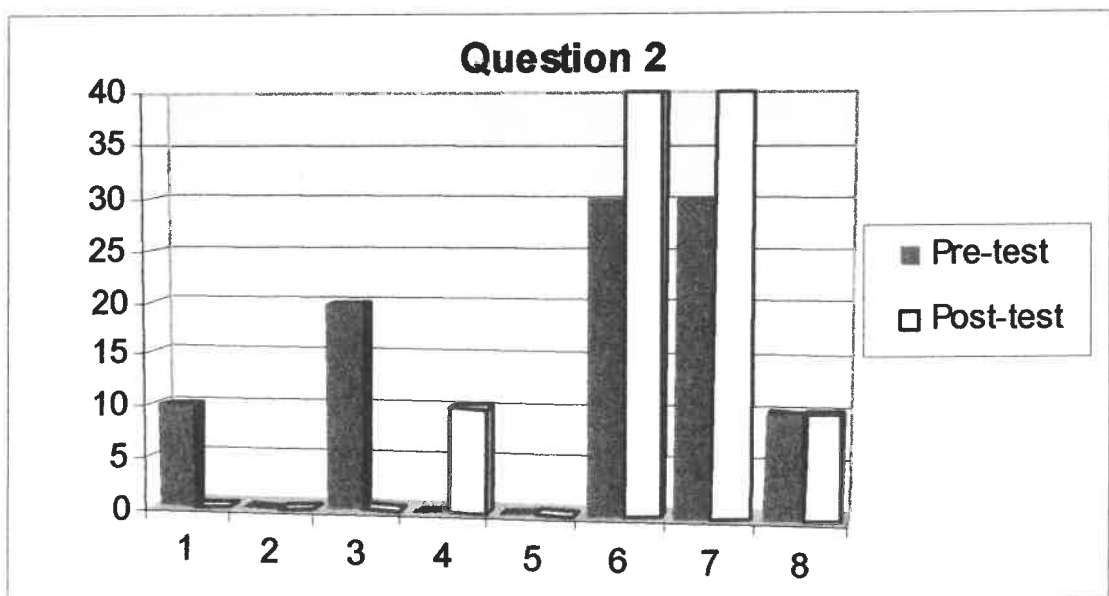
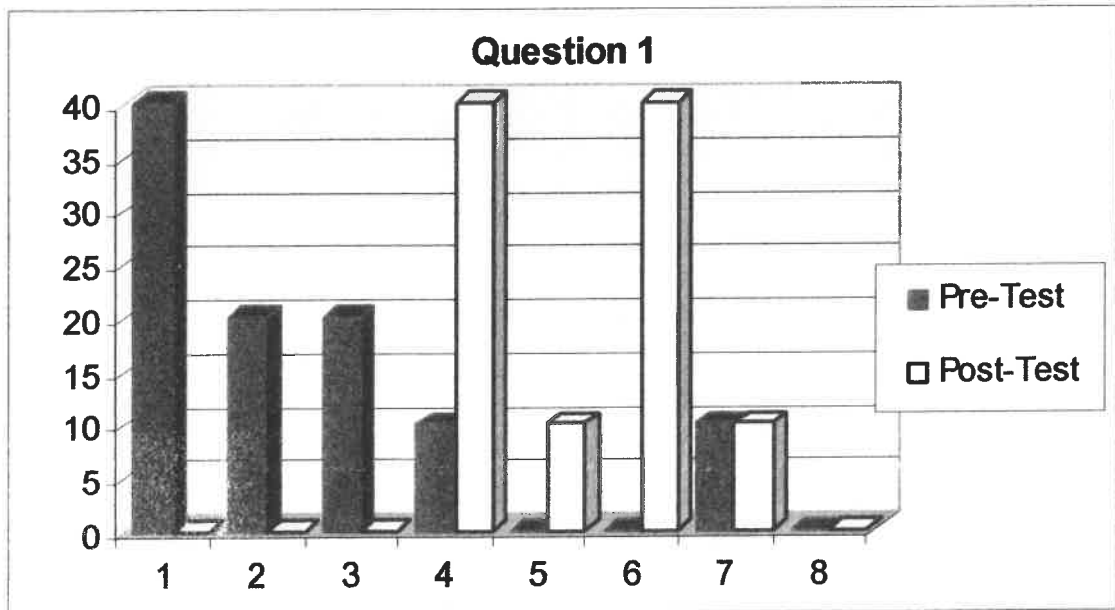


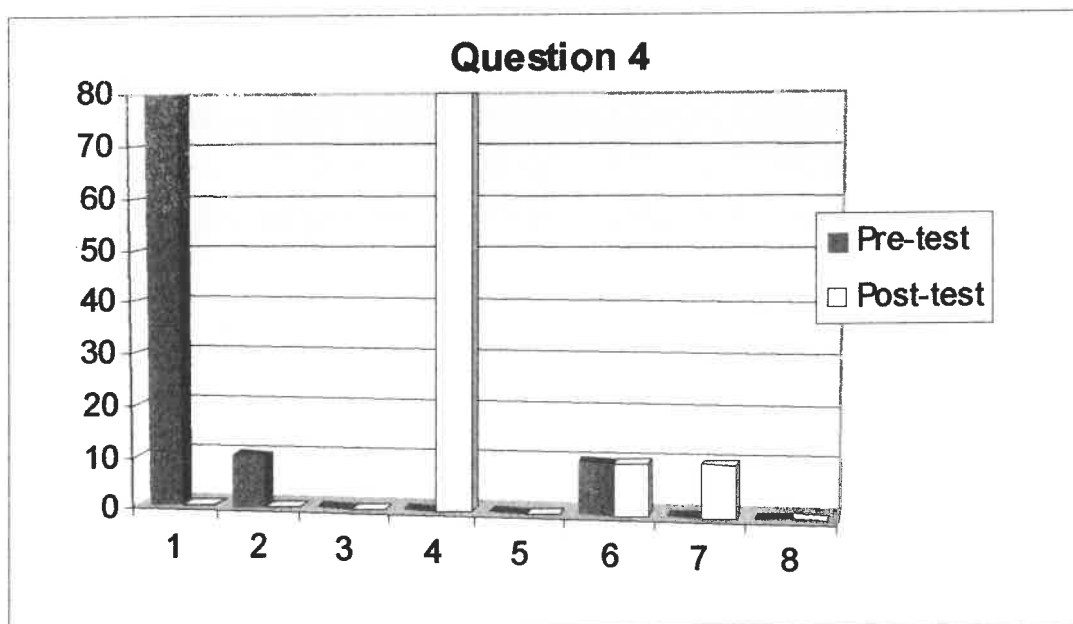
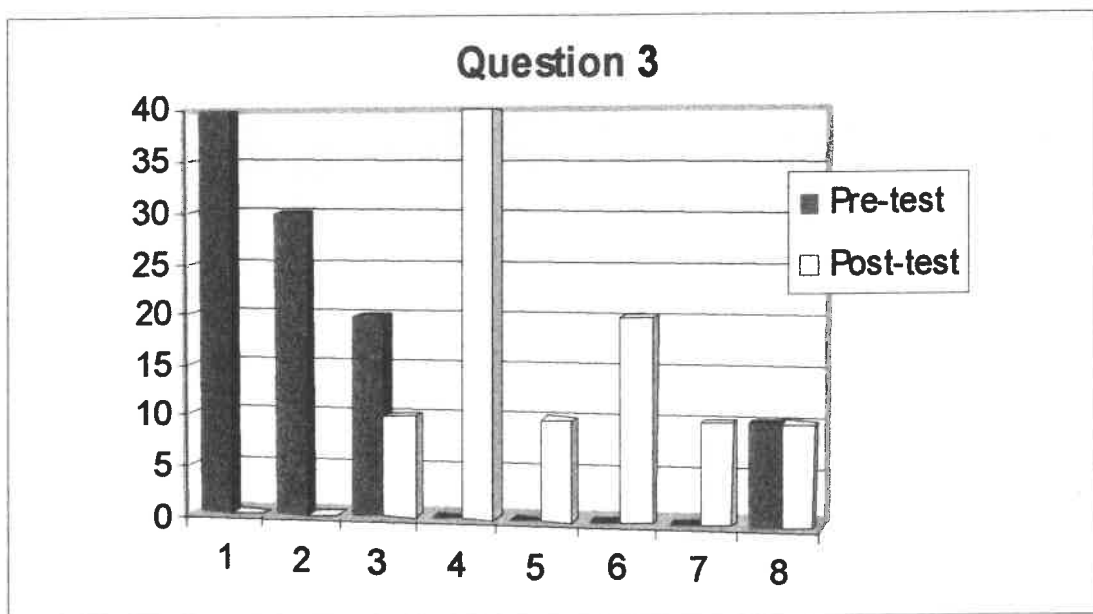
APPENDIX F
PRE-TEST AND POST-TEST RESULTS BY QUESTION

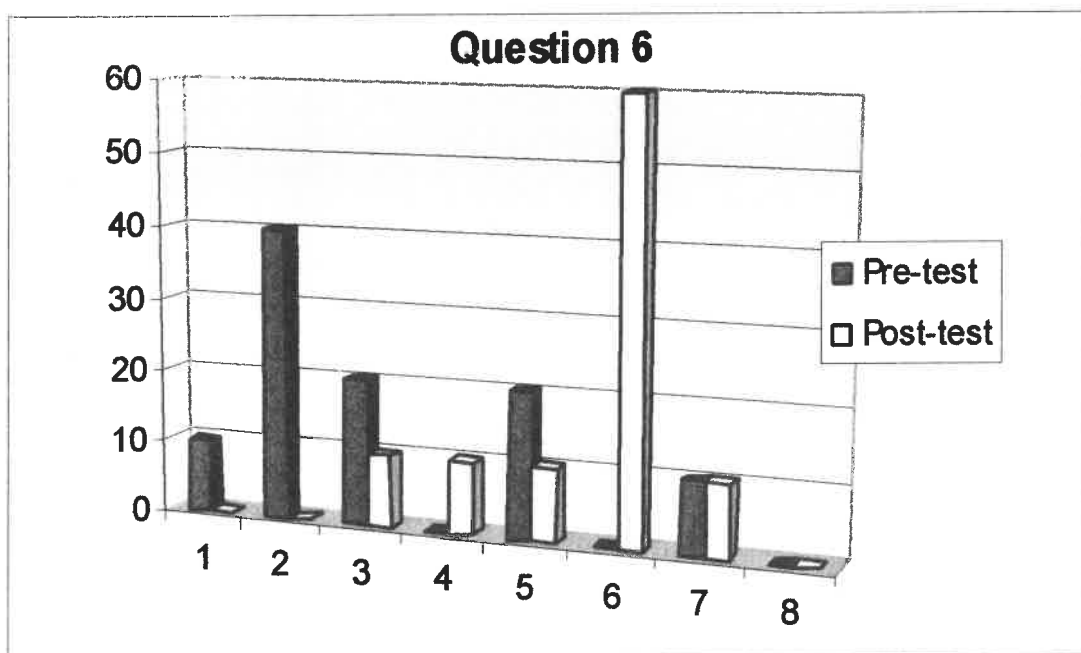
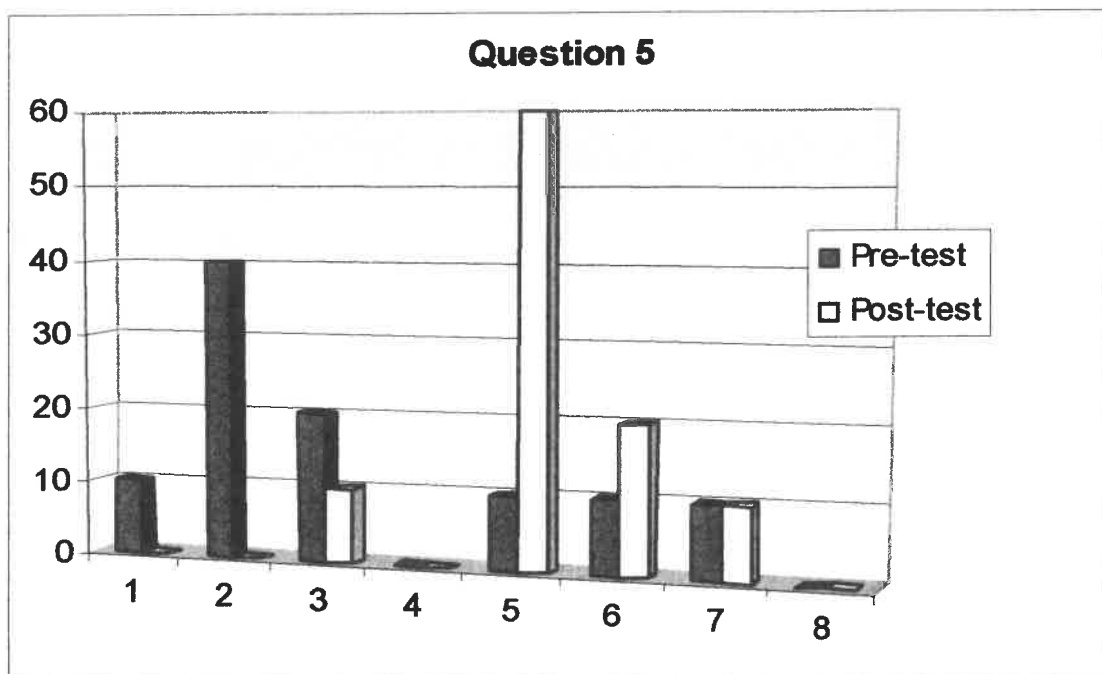
Merging Technology and Christian Education: A Method for Reaching Generation X

Doctoral Research Project by: Rev. Ruth McCants

Participant Pre-Test and Post-Test Responses Compared:







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